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Mikhail Tukhachevsky - the life and death of 'Red

TUACHEVSNY

LIFE AND DEATH OF THE RED MARSHAL

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Mikhail Tukhachevsky: the life and death of the "Red Marshal"

Publisher's abstract: In the white emigration camp, Tukhachevsky was considered an unprincipled careerist, ready to shed anyone's blood for the sake of his own career. In the USSR, on the contrary, the cult of the youngest army commander, who defeated Kolchak and Denikin, developed. Let's try to understand where is the truth, where is the beautiful legend, and where is the evil slander...

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From the author

In different years this person was called differently. Either the "Red Napoleon" or the "Soviet Bonaparte", then the "enemy of the people", then the "monster from the Bukharin-Trotskyist gang", then the prominent commander who died innocently in the era of Stalin's personality cult, then the "red marshal", who achieved the most outstanding successes in struggle against Kolchak and Denikin, then a "bloody marshal", who distinguished himself only in the war against the "poor peasants of the Tambov region" and did not enrich military science in any way. His name is overgrown with a thick layer of legends, conjectures, versions, romantic stories. Apologetics was replaced by a formidable sentence and a long-term figure of silence. Then again biographies like life

an innocently murdered martyr, and in the most recent years - publications, in

which the canonized marshal turns almost into a devil in human form. Who is this many-sided Janus, and what is true here, and what is a lie? It will be about one of the first Soviet marshals Mikhail Nikolaevich Tukhachevsky. And what kind of commander and person he was, the reader will find out after reading this book.

Tukhachevsky's sister-in-law, a cousin of his second wife and the wife of Mikhail Nikolayevich's closest friend, who was shot with him, was able to emigrate to the West after the Second World War. There, hiding under the pseudonym Lydia Nord (later we will find out who exactly is hiding behind this pseudonym), in the Parisian magazine Renaissance in 1957 she published a biography of the "Red Marshal", where she tried to answer the question of why so many controversies and legends gave rise to this outstanding person: "Perhaps, so many "legends" were woven about no one as about him. Foggy, often contradictory, they spread from two sides.

Tukhachevsky entered the environment of officers of the guard only a few months before the First World War - in fact, very few people in the tsarist army knew him: the officers of the Life Guards of the Semenovsky Regiment, the authorities and teachers of the Moscow Alexander Military School and his comrades in school and corps.

But in those days, hardly anyone was particularly interested in the inner world of the cadet, and after that - the young lieutenant. They started talking about Tukhachevsky when he advanced during the civil war as an outstanding red commander. The old military environment considered him a renegade and an upstart. Most, when discussing his personal qualities, spoke from the words of others and rarely impartially ... This is how the legends that gave rise to bad fame developed ...

In the Red Army, despite all his services to the revolution, he remained a "former guards officer" - a man of a foreign environment. People who were disposed towards him tried to add to his biography and personal qualities more that could bring him closer to the "proletarian society"... all people with "blue blood" possessed, and if they did not find them, then they invented them. This is how legends of a different kind were born."

In a word, a stranger among his own, but not a friend among strangers ... In the camp of white emigration, Tukhachevsky was considered an unprincipled careerist, ready to shed anyone's blood in order to achieve the next step in the military hierarchy. In the USSR, on the contrary, the cult of the youngest commander of the army and the front in the civil war, who wore the laurels of the winner of Kolchak and Denikin, developed. But latently in many colleagues, and especially in party leaders, there was always an analogy between a young officer who became a Bolshevik a few months after the revolution, and a Corsican lieutenant who began as a Jacobin, and ultimately became the grave-digger of the Great French Revolution ...

Let's try to understand where is the truth, and where is a beautiful legend born of love, or malicious slander - a consequence of the envy of rivals or the hatred of the vanquished. Our task is difficult. Very few documents about Tukhachevsky's life have been published so far. Most of the people close to him did not survive the wave of repression that followed the case of

"military fascist conspiracy". Almost nothing is known about

three wives of the marshal, about his personal life. In the Soviet Union in the 60s, when in connection with the rehabilitation of Tukhachevsky they started talking again, after a quarter of a century of silence, it was considered bad form to remember the wives of great people, if there were more than one wives, and even more so about mistresses. Therefore, the memoirs came out insipid, and their hero turned out completely without flaws, like an icon, and not a living person. At the end of the 80s and in the 90s, Tukhachevsky began to be painted predominantly in black, remembering not only Warsaw, but also Kronstadt and Tambov. Some historians and publicists generally denied him any military leadership abilities and put forward the thesis that the execution of Tukhachevsky and his comrades, regardless of the justice of the charges, was in fact a boon for the Red Army, since it cleared the way to the highest positions for Zhukov, Rokossovsky, Konev, Vasilevsky and other generals and marshals - winners in the Great Patriotic War.

I will try, dear reader, to show Tukhachevsky in all the complexity and inconsistency of his extraordinary nature. My hero was not a soulless machine, but he did not suffer from excessive reflection either. He knew big victories and no less big defeats. Bravely kept himself under enemy bullets, but became cowardly in the face of a quick and wrong judgment. He acquired the glory of an outstanding commander and no less outstanding punisher. He did not believe and believed in God, just as he believed and did not believe in Bolshevism and the world proletarian revolution. He loved the company of musicians, artists, composers, he made violins and played them, and at the same time with enthusiasm he developed plans for gas attacks against the Tambov peasants who had rebelled from hopelessness. Will you love, reader, Tukhachevsky, or will you curse him when you close this book?

In conclusion of this somewhat lengthy preface, I want to express my sincere gratitude to P. A. Aptekar and A. V. Molchanov for the materials provided and valuable advice in the process of working on this biography.

Where did the Tukhachevskys come from? Childhood and youth

Mikhail Tukhachevsky was born on February 4/16, 1893 in the Alexandrovskoye estate of the Dorogobuzh district of the Smolensk province. This estate is 200 acres of mortgaged-re-mortgaged, not very fertile land. The Tukhachevskys were from the very impoverished nobles, who could hardly make ends meet. Tukhachevsky's mother, Mavra Petrovna Milohova (another spelling of the surname is Milehova), was herself from the peasants of the village of Knyazhino. Her father, out of poverty, was forced to give one of the five daughters into the service of the landowner-widow Sofya Valentinovna Tukhachevskaya. The widow's son, Nikolai Nikolaevich, fell in love with Mavra, by that time he was the only surviving man in the ancient family. From the marriage of a nobleman and a peasant woman, the future marshal was born.

The origin of the Tukhachevsky family is no less shrouded in legends than its tragic end. The Encyclopedic Dictionary of Brockhaus and Efron says the following about the Tukhachevskys:

".. A noble family, originating, according to the legends of ancient genealogists, from Count Indris, who left for Chernigov from the Caesar's land under the Grand Duke Mstislav Vladimirovich, in the baptism of Konstantin. His descendants in the 15th century moved from Chernigov to Moscow and adopted the surname Tukhachevsky. In the 18th and 17th centuries, the Tukhachevskys served in Bryansk, and in

second half of the 17th century. were stolniks, solicitors, etc. Nikolai Sergeevich (1764-1832) was the governor of Tula, his son Nikolai Nikolaevich was the chief ataman of the Don Cossack army (1846). The Tukhachevsky family is included in \ part of the genealogy book of the Moscow province ... "

To this rather meager reference, one can add that, according to family legends, the legendary founder of the Tukhachevsky family, Count Indris, was of Hungarian origin. The most curious thing is that this legendary person was considered the ancestor of not only the Tukhachevskys, but also three other Russian noble families, including such a famous one as Tolstoy, who gave Russia and the world three great writers - Alexei Konstantinovich, Lev Nikolaevich and Alexei Nikolaevich. In the same Brockhaus and Efron we read about Tolstoy:

".. count and noble family, originating, according to the legends of ancient genealogists, from her husband honest Indris, who left, "from the Germans", from the Caesar's land, to Chernigov in 1353, with two sons and a squad of three thousand people; he was baptized , received the name of Leonty and was the ancestor of several noble families. His great-grandson, Andrei Kharitonovich, moved from Chernigov to Moscow and, having received the nickname Tolstoy from Grand Duke Vasily Temny, became the ancestor of T. ".

How do you know if Indris did not have literary abilities (if, of course, he knew the letter at all)? In any case, Tukhachevsky's orders, speeches and articles are distinguished by a certain style inherent in him and are written in good Russian, which, in particular, contributed to their popularity both among the military and among the civilian public.

I found more detailed information about the beginning of the Tolstoy family in the fundamental work of N. I. Gusev "Leo Nikolayevich Tolstoy. Materials for a biography." It quotes an "old genealogy" - a painting that in 1686 the Tolstoys, along with many other service people, submitted to the Chamber of Genealogical Affairs of the Discharge Order:

"In the summer of 6861 (that is, in 1352 or 1353 from R.Kh. - B.S.), a man of honorable family named Indros came from a German and Caesar's state with his two sons with Litvonis and Zigmonten, and with them came squads and their people were three thousand husbands and Indros and his children were baptized in Chernigov in the Orthodox Christian faith and gave them the names of Indros Leonty and his son Litvonis Konstantin and Zigmonten Fedor; and from Konstantin the son Khariton was born and Fedor died childless, writes about this in the chronicler of Chernigov ".

The first Count Tolstoy, Pyotr Andreevich, one of the glorious "chicks of Petrov's nest", who, most likely, made the painting, wrote directly in his autobiography:

"In the summer of 1352 my ancestor left Germany for the Russian state."

Further, in the Tolstoy painting, it was reported that Andrey Kharitonovich, the great-grandson of Indros, "came from Chernigov to Moscow to the Grand Duke Vasily Vasilyevich of All Russia. And the Grand Duke Vasily Vasilyevich of All Russia nicknamed him Tolstoy, hence the Tolstoys."

Thus, the name of the ancestors of the Tukhachevsky and Tolstoy

almost the same, Indris-Indros, so we can say with a high degree of certainty that it was the same person. But here about the time of his appearance in the Chernihiv land, tribal legends tell in different ways. Considering that Mstislav Vladimirovich was

Prince of Chernigov in 1026-1036, then it is hard to believe in the Hungarian origin of Indris. After all, then Hungary was not yet part of the "Caesar Land", that is, the "Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation", the future Austrian Empire, and Austria itself was not yet an empire and even a duchy. Tolstoy's version of the appearance of Indros with his sons and his retinue in Chernigov in 1352 or 1353 deserves more credibility. True, the Chernigov Chronicle, to which the Tolstoys refer, did not reach us, and in general there is no evidence that after the defeat of Chernigov by the Tatars in 1239 and the actual death of the principality, at least some kind of chronicle was conducted there. Perhaps this circumstance prompted the Tikhachevskys to attribute the arrival of Indris to Chernigov to the pre-Mongol era. But in this case, it is completely incomprehensible what the descendants of Indris did for four hundred years, until the time of Vasily the Dark, when their names finally appear in Russian chronicles, letters and discharge books.

As for the opinion that Indros was a native of Germany, it is no more solid than the idea of his Hungarian origin (let me remind you that in the 16th century Hungary was not yet part of the "Holy Roman Empire"). It is not for nothing that S. M. Solov'yov in his "History of Russia from Ancient Times" considered genealogical paintings "composed", and the Soviet historian S. B. Veselovsky spoke somewhat more diplomatically about the "abuse of fiction" in genealogical legends. Let the reader judge for himself whether a "husband of an honorable family" could be a German, if the names of his and his sons are clearly Lithuanian or, in the case of Zigmonten (Sigismund), are clearly given in Lithuanian vowels. By the way, it is possible that this latter, unlike his father and brother, is a fictitious person. The fact is that princes, dukes, kings and other rulers, as a rule, go through the pages of Russian annals and Byzantine and Western European chronicles - either three brothers, or a father with two sons. Recall that the legendary founder of the princely dynasty, Rurik, appeared in Novgorod, according to the chroniclers, not only with a faithful retinue, but also with the brothers Sineus and Truvor. This is explained by the fact that the trinity is a fundamental property of our thinking (that is why chroniclers most often count 3,000 "good men" in squads, sometimes increasing this figure to 30 or 300 thousand). True, then superfluous characters tend to die without leaving offspring, since the chroniclers do not have enough imagination or time to continue their genealogies. Perhaps it was for this reason that the son of Indros, Zigmonten-Fyodor, died childless. Litvinos-Konstantin and Indros, most likely, existed in reality and, judging by their names, before moving to Chernigov, they still adhered to ancient Lithuanian pagan beliefs. And if they had a squad, then, of course, not three thousand (at that time - a huge army), but several dozen people. The descendants of Konstantin could well give rise to Tolstoy and Tikhachevsky, as well as other noble families. If the legend is true that the ancestor of the Tikhachevskys, like the great-grandson of Indros Andrey Kharitonovich, arrived from Chernigov to Moscow in the 15th century, to the reign of Vasily the Dark, then it can be assumed that the ancestor of the Tikhachevskys was the brother of the one whom the Grand Duke awarded with the nickname Tolstoy (it can be seen from cause of incredible obesity and gluttony). At that time, Chernihiv land was part of the Catholic Grand Duchy of Lithuania, where

Orthodox were infringed in their rights compared to Catholics. Therefore, many Orthodox gentry preferred to move off to the Grand Dukes of Moscow, hoping that it would be easier to serve with fellow believers.

According to a legend widespread in the family, the surname Tukhachevsky comes from the name of the village Tukhachevsky. As if all the same Vasily Vasilyevich Temny granted a certain Bogdan Grigorievich "Tukhachevsky camp parish". It's hard to believe, to be honest. After all, as a rule, the village was called by the name of the landowner, and not vice versa. And the existence of the glorious Magyar Count Indris is very doubtful. Here the Tukhachevskys are by no means original. When in 1686, together with the Tolstoys and Tukhachevskys, another 540 service (non-princely) families filed genealogical lists, only 35 recognized their original Russian origin. The rest, as ancestors, indicated eminent foreigners from Prussia and Poland, Lithuania and Hungary, England and Sweden, France and Serbia, the Golden Horde and "Turkey", "from the mountains of Cherkasy" and the Persian kingdom. In fairness, it should be noted that if not the majority, then a very significant part of the Russian noble families, including, probably, all 35 "original", as well as almost all princely, descended from newcomers - the Varangians-Rus, Rurik and his retinue. However, at the end of the 17th century, the Norman theory of the origin of Russian princes did not yet exist. The genealogy of the "Velvet Book" of the Russian nobility, for which the Discharge Order collected genealogical lists, considered Rurik a descendant in the 14th knee of the brother of the Roman Emperor Augustus, the legendary founder of the Prussian land of Prus. Probably, there are few Russian (and not only Russian) pillar noble families where some mythical foreigner did not appear as the founder. Here the Bestuzhevs, for example, considered their ancestor a certain Englishman Best, clearly from the best of intentions ("With {" in English and means "the best"). But in this case, the surname gives out. "Bestuzhiy" in Old Russian meant the same as the modern word "shameless". I really wanted to ennoble the nickname-surname, and even make the clan more ancient, which, by the way, was not the least important in local disputes about obtaining positions ("places") in the public service, when the origin and official position of the ancestors were taken into account. It can be seen that with the Tukhachevskys and Count Indris there was exactly the same story. In this name you can really catch the German root. In Russian chronicles and letters, we will find several real-life people with a similar name Indrik, and almost all of them come from Scandinavia. So, at the end of 16th centuries, the Swedish governors Indrik Irik (Heindrek Eirik) and Indrik Biskupov, defeated by Russian Cossacks, are mentioned, and even earlier, during the Livonian War, the last master of the Livonian Order, Gottgars Ketler, sent a certain Indrik to Ivan the Terrible in 1558, trying to achieve peace. It is possible that the ancestor of the Tukhachevsky and Tolstoy was also of Scandinavian origin and bore the name Heindrek. Then he was hired to serve some feudal lord in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, and in Lithuania his name acquired a Lithuanian ending, and in Rus' it was transformed into Indros-Indris. But where did his descendants acquire the name Tukhachevsky? After all, it is indeed rare, and all its carriers ultimately belong to the same genus.

I'll note right away that something Hungarian, if desired, can be in it

hear. At least by analogy with the Hungarian city of Mohacs. Just on

in fact, this is a Turkic name, from the Polovtsians who visited Hungary (one can also recall the Bosnian Bihac - the legacy of the Ottoman Empire). So Indris or his descendants could intermarry with the Lithuanian Tatars (and, perhaps, already in Rus' - with people from the Golden Horde) or with the descendants of the Khazars - the Karaites, who made up the guard of the Lithuanian princes. The very form of the ending of the surname also indicates that its bearers were from Lithuania, like the princes Massalsky, Trubetskoy, Glinsky. Like other Polish and Lithuanian gentry who converted to Orthodoxy, the Tukhachevskys quickly became Russified, and in the 18th century, when the service of the Tukhachevskys can already be traced through digit books, they were hardly distinguished ethnically from the bulk of the Russian nobility.

To finish with the genealogy, I will give another, this time completely legendary version of the origin of Count Indris. He is allegedly a direct descendant of one of the leaders of the First Crusade, Count Baldwin of Flanders, who first ruled Edessa, conquered from the Muslims, and in 1100 became king of the kingdom of Jerusalem created by the crusaders. One of his descendants did not find anything better than to be employed in Lithuania, where he received the possession of the village of Tukhachevo, the location of which, however, has not been established to this day.

Nikolai Nikolayevich was a kind but impractical person. Daughters Ekaterina and Olga claim that the father "had advanced views for his time, free from noble arrogance." There is no doubt that he is free from class prejudices, since he married a poor peasant woman. He married for great love, and there was something to love for. How this happened was recalled by Abram Petrovich Kosolapov, who lived until the 60s of the twentieth century, who served in the Alexander baker:

"There lived at that time in our village of Knyazhnino a poor peasant, his name was Pyotr Prokhorovich Milokhov. And now he, this poor peasant, had five daughters and ... all of them ... were beautiful. Though Aksinya, even Nastya and Olga, even though Alyonushka ... Well, Mavra, so there's nothing to say about this beauty, both in height, in stateliness, in face. And broken, even though she didn't know letters then, well, if you talk to someone, then another literate person cannot be compared with her ... She worked for the Tukhachevskys on the estate, and Nikolai Nikolaevich fell in love with her. It used to be standing, looking at Mavra and smiling all the time ... Of course, she is older than her for years, but by itself - nothing, tall, dark-haired, only his eyes were somehow tired. Sofya Alevtinovna understood that her Kolenka had fallen in love with Mavrushcha, she was a sharp-sighted woman ... "

Mavra's parents were probably glad that their daughter had married so well, had risen from hopeless poverty to prosperity, which Milokhov never dreamed of. However, the relative prosperity of the Tukhachevskys did not last very long. And Nikolai Nikolaevich himself was to blame for this.

Olga Nikolaevna recalled:

"Father could not stand drunkenness. Wine was never served at home, there were not even glasses. He loved horses, running and racing."

Mikhail inherited his dislike for alcohol from his father. All my life I drank very moderately, preferring good cognac. By this he strikingly

different from many colleagues in the Russian and Red Army. For example, Marshal Georgy Konstantinovich Zhukov, who later became famous in the late 1920s, while still a simple commander of a regiment, received a "stricter man with an entry" not only for "immorality" (then the first and second wives out of four fought for him), but also for the same banal drunkenness. They sinned even more in the Red Army than in the tsarist. But on Tukhachevsky, like on his father, this sin was not. Only sobriety did not save Nikolai Nikolaevich. The savings that were generated by not spending on alcohol were more than offset by losses at the races.

In addition, Nikolai Nikolayevich knew nothing about agriculture and, being a kind person by nature, did not show the necessary firmness with the tenants. Relations with the peasants were built quite patriarchally and for the most part to the detriment of the master.

The cousin of Nikolai Nikolaevich, Colonel M. N. Balkashin, living out his life in exile, recalled:

"In the event of any need or misfortune - fire, injury, loss of livestock, the peasants went to the Tukhachevskys and received this or that help. she treated them herself and gave them medicines. The peasants mercilessly poisoned their meadows and cut down in the forest. When their brother shamed them for this, they said: "So where can we get it if not from you, Nikolai Nikolaevich?" - and the usual chorus began : "We are yours, you are ours," that was the end of the matter. For their part, the peasants, in the event of any event at the Tukhachevskys: a dam break at the mill, a forest fire, and others, without any call came together to help.

The family in which the future marshal was born was large. Mikhail was the third child in a row, and in total God awarded four sons and five daughters to Nikolai Nikolaevich and Mavra Petrovna. The latter, according to the testimony of the same Balkashin, "was a beautiful soul person, modest, friendly, a good mother and mistress. She enjoyed great respect from her neighbors, landowners and peasants." However, the housekeeping of the wife could not compensate for the helplessness of the husband in household affairs. In 1898, they had to sell Aleksandrovskeye for debts, and the Tukhachevskys moved to an equally upset, but smaller estate of Sofya Valentinovna near the village of Vrazhskoye in the Chembarsky district of the Penza province. Here the Tukhachevskys were just as imprudent in their relations with the peasants as they were in Alexandrovskoye. But this impracticality after October 1917 quite unexpectedly turned into, one might say, a serious benefit.

Mikhail's sister Olga recalled her father:

"He was a direct, pure person, without any conventions and prejudices. Therefore, they went bankrupt and were left without everything. But after the revolution, when the peasants divided the estate, they gathered a meeting and decided to give us two cows, two horses, agricultural equipment and said, that they remember how their father and grandmother helped them.

Mikhail's grandmother was a remarkable woman in many ways. Clever, educated, Sofya Valentinovna visited Paris more than once, personally knew Turgenev and even supposedly served as a prototype for the heroine of Turgenev's story "An Evening in Sorrento", attended a circle

Pauline Viardot. She was a good pianist, studied with Anton himself

Rubinstein, met the great Chopin in France, loved to play his works, as well as the music of Beethoven, Liszt, Mozart. Sofya Valentinovna and Nikolai Nikolaevich often played four hands on the piano, on which Rubinstein once gave concerts. A student of Taneyev and the best expert on Scriabin, Nikolai Sergeevich Zhilyaev, was friends with them, who later became friends with Mikhail Nikolayevich, with whom he maintained the kindest relations for life and shared a tragic fate. Through Zhilyaev, Tukhachevsky met Nikolai Nikolaevich Kulyabko, the first Bolshevik musicologist in his life, who also became his friend and played an important role at the initial stage of the military career of the "Red Napoleon".

Michael from an early age was drawn to music. Many years later, in the winter of 1937, probably anticipating an imminent arrest, he said to one of the sisters:

"As in my childhood I asked to buy me a violin, and my father, because of the eternal lack of money, could not do this. Maybe I would have become a professional violinist ..."

As a result, Tukhachevsky played the violin only at an amateur level. But he showed great interest in the manufacture of violins, becoming the only marshal in the world - a violin maker.

Nikolai Nikolaevich instilled in children an interest not only in music, but also in books. Mikhail learned to read early and read a lot, voraciously. Arranged and home performances. The sisters remember:

"The plays were composed by themselves, and they themselves drew funny posters. The main characters were Mikhail and Shura. Nikolai opened and closed the curtain, and also acted as a prompter. Igor played the piano."

Then, already in the gymnasium, Chekhov came to replace the amateur plays. In the staging of Chekhov's "Surgery" Mikhail played the role of a paramedic, and in "Gimp" - a deacon. In those years, these and other Chekhov pieces were included in the standard repertoire of home theaters. The namesake of Tukhachevsky and almost the same age as Mikhail Bulgakov at the same time, hundreds of miles from the deeply provincial Penza, in the flowering, fragrant gardens of Kiev, "the mother of Russian cities", was remembered by his sisters for his brilliant performance of the role of accountant Khirin in another Chekhov production - "Jubilee". Bulgakov was destined to become a great writer and playwright. It seems that Tukhachevsky also had literary and artistic abilities. Those who knew him noted the unusual for the Soviet military ability to behave in any society, as well as the irresistible, almost hypnotic impression that the marshal made on women.

Even having firmly connected his life with the army, Tukhachevsky remained no stranger to literary work, publishing many articles on a military theme in newspapers and magazines. The former secretary of the newspaper of the Western District "Krasnoarmeyskaya Pravda" N. V. Krasnopolsky testified:

Tukhachevsky "did not tolerate the so-called" authorship ". Our repeated attempts to slip articles prepared by the editorial staff for his signature were rejected from the threshold. Mikhail

Nikolayevich had a certain literary name, his own literary style, a stable literary reputation, and he valued this very much.

But it was not in literature and art that Tukhachevsky saw his destiny. Since childhood, he dreamed of becoming an officer and prepared himself for

hardships of military service. Sisters Elizabeth and Olga recalled:

"Still very young, Mikhail became addicted to horseback riding, exercised with kettlebells, loved to wrestle very much. And rarely anyone of his peers could overcome him. Brother Nikolai asked in surprise:

- What are you, getting ready for the circus, or what? Why do you need all these workouts? Why are you gathering strength?

And Misha answered with childish spontaneity:

- I need strength not to need outside help if I need to move a desk or a bookcase. This habit of doing everything on his own, not resorting to the help of others unnecessarily remained with him for the rest of his life.

Mikhail showed an early interest in military service. M. N. Balkashin recalled:

"Misha was distinguished by a special liveliness of character. From early childhood he had a love for the military, it doesn't matter whether he was a soldier who came to do free work, a police officer came to visit or anyone else, as long as he was in military uniform. Me, when I came to Tukhachevsky as a cadet, and then as an officer, he literally adored, immediately took possession of my saber, spurs and cap. He forced me to tell various heroic episodes from our wars, about the exploits of our soldiers and officers. Yermolov and Paskevich. In his youth, he was fond of campaigns and battles of great commanders. He knew Russian military history excellently, bowed to Peter the Great, Suvorov and Skobelev."

Tukhachevsky himself told Lydia Nord that he was infected with military affairs at a very young age from his great-uncle the general, warriors to the marrow of his bones:

"I always looked at him with delight and respect, listening to his stories about the battles. Grandfather noticed this, and once, putting me on his knees, I was then seven or eight years old, he asked: "Well, Mishchuk, and who do you want to be?" - "General", - I answered without hesitation. "Look! he laughed. "Yes, you're Bonaparte right here - you immediately aim for generals." And since then, when my grandfather came to us, he asked: "Well, Bonaparte, how are you?" With his light hand, they called me Bonaparte at home ... In the Bonapartes I, of course, did not aim, but I confess, I really wanted to become a general.

Mikhail continued to do gymnastics and wrestling, building up his strength, which, he was sure, would be very useful in military service. Among comrades, physical strength and readiness to always come to the aid of the weak gave him authority. Mikhail communicated mainly with children from ordinary families. Democratism instilled by the father had an effect. In addition, poverty did not allow the boy to feel on an equal footing in the company.

high school students from wealthy noble families.

Tukhachevsky's gymnasium friend V. Studensky recalled:

"French wrestling was of the greatest interest to us. It was during these years that wrestlers began to perform in the circus, and we, high school students, imitating them and calling ourselves the name of this or that wrestler, arranged our wrestling championships. Misha performed under the name of Poddubny and his equals he was not strong among us. Yes, and he significantly exceeded each of us in height. In addition to wrestling, we often engaged in lifting weights. Misha, who was then about 14 years old, easily

did exercises with weights. In the gymnasium, using Misha's strength, we, his comrades, often arranged such entertainment: several people hung on him, and he dragged us around the class, trying not to throw us off.

Another classmate, V. G. Ukrainsky, confirms that Tukhachevsky stood out among his comrades with a strong physique and great physical strength, and

"by his nature, he was firm in his decisions, kept himself simple, willingly shared with all the acquired knowledge and enjoyed authority among his comrades. It should, however, be noted that he had little contact with high school students from an aristocratic and spiritual society. Guys from simple families, close to he was valued and respected... Misha loved gymnastics, he was strong... He could at the same time, resting against his desk, move several desks at once for some distance. Tukhachevsky prevented disputes between his classmates from ending in a fight or reprisals against someone. He always stood up for the weak. And he tried to instill these humane qualities in others. "

The same portrait of our hero is drawn by another high school student, S. Ostrovsky:

"..Mikhail Nikolaevich ... stood out for his physical strength and endurance. So, for example, exposing his back, he allowed him to hit it with all the force that each of us possessed, and during this "exercise" he smiled. He was distinguished by his amazing coolness and restraint, I did not see him angry or agitated. In relation to his comrades ... he was fair, never enjoyed the superiority of his physical strength, and the weak found reliable protection from him. "

'The same is confirmed by Studensky:

"Misha's character was very sociable, he treated his comrades well, who paid him the same, and even the friendly nickname "Behemoth" was only an expression of comradely encouragement, and perhaps some envy of his strength."

The hippopotamus is a big, strong and good-natured animal, which is why they awarded Tukhachevsky with such a nickname. It also emphasized the incredible stability of Tukhachevsky - he, like the multi-ton inhabitant of the Nile, was very difficult to knock down. S. Ostrovsky explained the origin of this funny nickname:

"He was incredibly strong, broad-shouldered, we jokingly called him a hippopotamus - he allowed himself to be hit on the back and never fell."

And in life, Tukhachevsky was very persistent, failures and troubles could never break him or even bring him out of balance for a long time.

Knowledgeable people, or at least those who read Bulgakov's novel *The Master and Margarita*, may remember that Behemoth was the name of one of the demons. But the high school student Mishcha Tukhachevsky many years later was called the "demon of the civil war" - the head of the Revolutionary Military Council, Lev Trotsky, put a purely positive meaning into these words, emphasizing his merits in the defeat of the white armies. Later, many publicists, not knowing about the gymnasium nickname, called the youngest red marshal a demon in the traditional sense of the word, especially recalling

him cruelty during the suppression of the Kronstadt and Tambov uprisings. Many believe that the name determines the fate of a person. Did a comic nickname affect Tukhachevsky's life path? However, the students probably did not know anything about the demon Behemoth.

In Vrazhsky they lived only in summer, and in winter - in Penza, where children studied. According to the recollections of neighbors and friends, in Vrazhskoye the Tukhachevskys were already barely making ends meet, constantly experiencing an acute shortage of money. Mikhail entered the 1st Penza gymnasium, where he stayed from 1904 to 1909. He studied neither shaky nor rolls. In gymnasium journals, unflattering entries for the future commander were preserved: "Despite his abilities, he studied poorly"; "Diligence - 3"; "Attention - 2"; "I missed 127 lessons in a year"; "Had 3 penalties for talking in class." And so on and so forth. As Tukhachevsky's classmate Sergey Stepanovich Ostrovsky recalled, Mikhail was significantly superior to the vast majority of his peers in terms of development, and he was simply bored to study at the gymnasium. Although individual subjects loved and knew them very well. So, in French and German, Tukhachevsky spoke so freely that he subsequently aroused surprise among the French and German military and politicians. Interested in astronomy. Together with his brother Nikolai, Mikhail equipped a weather station in Vrazhskoye, and in the evenings he liked to look through a telescope at the starry sky. But the most serious problems arose with the law of God.

Nikolai Nikolayevich did not believe in God and raised his children in an atheistic spirit. And, as the sisters recalled,

"Michael became the most militant atheist. He invented all sorts of anti-religious stories and sometimes even "overdid it", involuntarily offending the pious dressmaker Polina Dmitrievna living in our house. This she did not always succeed in. One day, after several unsuccessful remarks, getting angry in earnest, she poured a cup of cold tea on Misha's head.

It really is like water off a duck's back (or maybe tea?). I would venture to suggest that the peasant woman Mavra, even after becoming the wife of a free-thinking landowner, did not lose faith in God and deep down she was deeply worried that her son Michael was growing up such a blasphemer ... Dislike

Tukhachevsky to Orthodoxy was also noticed in the gymnasium, which threatened to become a serious obstacle to continuing education. At the teachers' council, the priest complained:

"Mikhail Tukhachevsky is not engaged in the law of God."

According to V. G. Ukrainian, a gymnasium friend of our hero, he

"did not believe in Christ and in the lessons of the law of God allowed some liberties in relation to teachers. For this he was punished several times and even removed from the class."

The same memoirist claims that the gymnasium authorities found out only in the fifth year that Tukhachevsky never took communion and was not at confession. The father was summoned to the school and demanded to influence his son. As a result, Mikhail nevertheless took communion and confessed, but it became dangerous for him to remain in the Penza gymnasium. Due to the established reputation, they could be expelled at any time. And that's supposedly why

parents decided to move to Moscow, where Mikhail continued his studies at the 10th Moscow gymnasium. It is possible that the move was really connected with the desire to avoid scandal. But there could be a more prosaic reason. Nikolai Nikolaevich, not without reason, believed that the gymnasiums in the capital provide education of a much higher level than in Penza. The difference became especially noticeable in the senior classes, and the children grew up. In addition, it was in the last, 4th grade at the Penza gymnasium that Mikhail studied especially poorly. He didn't like it here. The future commander had long dreamed of changing his gymnasium uniform to a cadet uniform.

Elizabeth and Olga Tukhachevsky explain why the brother did not burn with the desire to gnaw at the granite of gymnasium wisdom:

"From an early age, Misha asked his father to send him to the cadet corps, but his father was against it. He gave in to these requests only after Misha had re-examinations and he promised to study perfectly if he was allowed to become a cadet. Misha studied excellently in the corps, passed from class to class with awards.

A slight digression is needed here. Tukhachevsky studied in the cadet corps for only a year, in the senior class, and could not move from class to class, with or without awards. But in the Moscow gymnasium, where he stayed for two years, he really began to study better and, when moving from class to class, he received a commendable sheet. It can be assumed that the father set a condition for his son: first to prove a change in attitude towards studying at the gymnasium and thereby the seriousness of his intentions, and only then to enter the cadet corps.

There could be another reason that finally prompted Nikolai Nikolayevich to give in. The reason is quite material. It was lucidly stated by a friend and the first Soviet biographer of Tukhachevsky, General Alexander Ivanovich Todorsky, who was lucky enough to return alive from the Gulag:

"The family barely made ends meet ... Mikhail was finishing the 6th grade of the gymnasium. Two years remained before he received his matriculation certificate, and before entering the people there were still whole years of university studies. Only

in at least six years he could get on his feet ... This period could be cut in half by enrolling in a military institution.

"The uniform you wear is for life."

Cadet corps and cadet school

The well-known Soviet dissident general Petro Grigorenko was only once at the reception of the Deputy People's Commissar for Defense, Marshal Tukhachevsky. And I heard from a man "with an aristocratic face, so well known from the portraits":

"Remember that the uniform you wear and everything connected with it is for life."

He underlined the last word. The love of freedom eventually forced Grigorenko to abandon the general's uniform and all the privileges associated with high military rank and position, to change military service to human rights activities. Tukhachevsky, on August 16, 1911, having started classes in the last, 7th grade of the 1st Moscow Empress Catherine II of the Cadet Corps, put on a military uniform for the first time - a cadet. And he no longer took off until the last moments of his life (although shortly before his death, the luxurious marshal's uniform had to be changed to a worn - Red Army

tunic). In the military profession, he found his life calling.

The 1st Moscow Corps was a privileged institution. Here the teaching of not only special military, but also general education subjects was well established. The 18-year-old boy was fascinated by military affairs. He was quite used to the Spartan life within the walls of the corps, willingly engaged in drill training, went on boy scout excursions, walks, being physically strong and dexterous, was the first in the gymnastic class ... It was said that Tukhachevsky could, sitting in the saddle, pull himself up on his hands together with a horse. The year of issue of Tukhachevsky, 1912, is the year of the 100th anniversary of the Patriotic War of 1812. Accordingly, the theme of the graduation essay for the Cadets was "Patriotic War and Its Heroes." They arranged an excursion to the Borodino field, but not a simple one, but in conditions close to combat: with reconnaissance, forced march, with field kitchens ... Tukhachevsky passed all the exams with excellent marks, and on June 1, 1912 he received the coveted certificate. His name was inscribed on a marble plaque. While still in the corps, Mikhail compiled a dictionary of proverbs and sayings related to military affairs: "A bold attack is half a victory", "Fight loves courage", "A strong army is a governor", "Know how to be a soldier in order to be a general". The young cadet continued to dream of a future generalship.

When Mikhail was in the cadet corps, his grandfather, a general, died. Many years later, Tukhachevsky told his sister-in-law about his will:

"Grandfather wanted to see me before his death ... When I arrived and went in to him, grandfather indicated that I should sit on the edge of the bed, and, raising my long and bony hand with difficulty, put it on my shoulder. three things, Mishchuk, he said. - The first thing is that you will graduate from college as a sergeant major. The second is that you will drink moderately. And third, that you will graduate from the Academy of the General Staff. Try to go to the Semyonovsky regiment. From the beginning of its foundation, under Peter, our ancestor Mikhail Artamonovich Tukhachevsky served in Semenovskiy. Over there, in the office, in

in the top drawer is his miniature portrait, I give it to you, you look like him and look like ... "

And the great-nephew fulfilled all the grandfather's precepts.

In August 1912, Tukhachevsky entered the Alexander Military School in Moscow. He did not enter more prestigious St. Petersburg schools, such as the elite Pavlovsk: life in the capital of the empire, away from his parents, was too expensive. Junker Tukhachevsky studied earnestly: he had to finish the course as one of the best in order to be able to choose a vacancy in the guards regiment, to give a good start to his career. Already at the school, he especially carefully studied military disciplines, with an eye on future admission to the Academy of the General Staff. The First World War and the Revolution prevented this dream from coming true. Tukhachevsky's acquaintance with the Bolshevik N. N. Kulyabko dates back to 1912, which soon grew into a great friendship. Nikolai Nikolaevich graduated from the Gnessin Musical College and began to study at the Conservatory with Professor N. S. Zhilyaev, thanks to whom he became a member of the Tukhachevskys' house. The first meeting with the future marshal was well remembered by Kulyabko:

"One Sunday, when I was talking with the two Tukhachevsky brothers, a third came. My father introduced him to me. It was Mikhail Nikolayevich. He had just graduated from the Moscow Cadet Corps and entered the Alexander Military School as a cadet ...

political views had already been determined, and I was not without prejudice towards the Junker Tukhachevsky. "The future pillar of the throne," I thought of him. However, none other than Mikhail Nikolayevich himself immediately made me doubt the correctness of this assumption of mine. The brothers informed Mikhail that they were preparing to visit the Kremlin Palace, where there would certainly be "August" persons. To my surprise, he received this message with some skepticism.

- What, you're not going? the brothers were surprised.

- I'm not very interested in this, - Mikhail shrugged his shoulders and hurried to his school.

We left the house together. On the way they started talking about the revolution of the fifth year. Mikhail questioned me with great interest, and I was finally convinced that my companion was a serious, thinking young man, who by no means shared the loyal views characteristic of most Cadets and Junkers. Gradually, I was more and more imbued with sympathy for Mikhail Nikolaevich. Our conversations became more and more frank from time to time. Mikhail did not hide his critical attitude towards the autocracy and the so-called "high society". Where did such free thinking come from? Probably, the views that prevailed in the Tukhachevsky family had an effect first of all. Yes, and Michael himself, being a smart, impressionable young man, could not remain indifferent to all those abominations that accompanied tsarism everywhere and everywhere.

The sisters of Tukhachevsky attributed the anti-monarchist sentiments of their brother mainly due to the influence of Kulyabko. And they recalled another typical case:

"Once during a walk, the nanny took us to see

the tsar who came to Moscow. When Misha found out about this, he began to explain to us that the tsar is the same person as anyone else, and it's stupid to go and look at him on purpose. And then through the wall we heard Michael, in a conversation with his brothers, calling the tsar an idiot."

Undoubtedly, an atheist father could not be a monarchist, and he did not instill in his children any respect for the imperial family. Yes, and a Bolshevik friend could only strengthen Mikhail's dislike for the autocracy. But there was, I think, another important reason for Michael's extremely derogatory attitude towards the reigning monarch. In Russian society, the humiliating defeat in the war with Japan, which showed the weakness of the Russian army and navy, was hard to bear. This was especially keenly felt in the military environment, where many saw the reason for the inability of Nicholas II to effectively manage the state and be worthy of the Supreme Commander. Tukhachevsky, who dreamed of the laurels of a commander, probably took the failure in the Russo-Japanese war very close to his heart, and this strengthened his critical attitude towards the autocracy, unable to provide the combat power of the Russian army.

About the years spent by Mikhail Nikolayevich in the Alexander School, the memoirs of the cadet of another school, Alekseevsky, Vladimir Postoronkin, have been preserved. He fought in the ranks of the Whites, and wrote his memoirs in 1928 in exile, in Prague, without feeling the slightest sympathy for the "red marshal". Nevertheless, what Postoronkin recalls seems to be true:

"Gukhachevsky was a sergeant major at the Alexander Military School in the 1913-1914 military training year, while the author was

cadet of the Alekseevsky military school. The joint service in Moscow of all those who studied in these two twin schools came into contact too closely, which was due to the circumstances of service training in shooting, camp-field and tactical-maneuvering. In addition, visiting each other during festive and off-duty hours within the walls of their schools, the cadets got to know each other closely.

Of course, Postoronkin was not a friend of Tukhachevsky and did not even study at the same school with him, but they still had some kind of acquaintance. Yes, and Tukhachevsky was a prominent figure, the cadets talked a lot about him, so the memoirist could also rely on the testimonies of classmates and comrades of Mikhail Nikolayevich. And this is how Tukhachevsky appears:

"..Brilliantly graduated from the cadet corps as a vice-sergeant major and was appointed to take a course of sciences at the Alexander Military School. On September 1, 1912, he was enlisted ... as a cadet of the 2nd company.

Distinguished by his great abilities, vocation for military affairs, zeal for service, he very soon stands out from among other junkers.

A 19-year-old young man ... quickly gets used to the life of a cadet of that time. Disciplined and devoted to the demands of service, Tukhachevsky was soon noticed by his superiors, but, unfortunately, he does not enjoy the love of his comrades, which is his own fault, he shuns those around him and does not get close to anyone, limiting himself only to official, purely official relations. Immediately, from the very first steps, Tukhachevsky occupies a position that

exposes his passionate desire to be a sergeant major or a senior junker harness.

At one of the tactical exercises, junior cadet Tukhachevsky shows himself to be an excellent serviceman who understands the meaning of service and the demands of duty. Being appointed to the guard guard, due to some misunderstanding, he was not replaced in a timely manner and, forgotten, remained at his post. He stood at his post overtime for more than an hour and did not want to change on the order transmitted to him by the sent junker.

He was replaced by the company commander himself, who appointed him to the post of outpost of the 2nd company. This took some more time. They immediately started talking about Tukhachevsky, setting as an example his understanding of the duties of the service and his inner understanding of the spirit of the charters on which this very service was based. He was promoted by production to the junker harness without a position, while others could not even dream of junker harness stripes.

Postoronkin finds such an exemplary service zeal not too lofty explanation, although he recognizes the outstanding qualities of Tukhachevsky as a military man:

"A magnificent drillman, shooter and instructor, Tukhachevsky was drawn to a career ", over time he became blindly devoted to service, a fanatic in achieving one goal that he set for himself as a guiding principle - to achieve the maximum service career, even if for this principle he had to risk , put the maximum bet".

Well, in the end, there is nothing wrong if a young gifted (or even not very gifted) person seeks to make a career. The whole question is what means he uses to achieve this goal. Tukhachevsky surprised teachers and cadets with his abilities in

the most varied areas. Postoronkin recalled:

"When moving to the senior class, he receives a prize-award for a first-class solution to an examination tactical problem (one of the works of well-known authors on tactics was given out). Further, he receives gratitude from the school for the systematic determination of distances and successful shooting. Being an excellent gymnast and an incomparable fencer, he receives first prize at the school tournament in the spring of 1913 - a saber of the newly introduced model in the troops to be worn out of order at will.

Tukhachevsky retained his passion for gymnastics until the last days of his life. Dumbbells were kept in his office and when he was deputy people's commissar, with which he practiced during short breaks in work. In general, about the Junker years, one gets the impression that Mikhail Nikolayevich was a real darling of fate, striving to be the first in everything and almost always achieved this. But at what cost!

Postoronkin testifies:

"In the service, he had neither relatives nor pity for others ... In 1913, already in his senior year, Tukhachevsky was appointed sergeant major of his 2nd company. He studied very well, but among his fellow students ... he did not enjoyed neither sympathy nor sympathy; everyone shunned him, were afraid and knew for sure that in case of any mistake to wait

mercy is impossible, the sergeant major will not cover the deed of the offender.

Feldwebel Tukhachevsky treated the junior course completely arbitrarily: he punished with the highest penalty for the slightest offense newcomers who had just entered the service and had not yet got used to the created service environment and were not drawn into school LIFE.

Possessing great disciplinary rights, he handed out punishments in full measure and in abundance, never entering into consideration of the motives that prompted this or that omission in service.

I note that in this case the memoirist has a relatively greater objectivity of an outside observer: he himself was a cadet of another school and could not suffer in any way from the Dzhimordovsky habits of sergeant major Tukhachevsky. The more valuable is Postoronkin's message about the tragic results of the service zeal of the future "red marshal":

"In his official activities as a sergeant major of a company of junkers, the demanding and merciless Tukhachevsky left a deep mark on the life of the school: a number of conflicts and incidents were created that then had sad consequences. According to the report of the sergeant major, two cadets of the 2nd company were transferred to the Alekseevsky military school: Nemchinov Evgeny for allowing himself to notice the sergeant-major his excessive captiousness, expressed in a number of petty remarks that finally brought the aforementioned cadet out of patience, and Georgy Maslov was expelled from the school (later he was killed in battle with the Germans) for being unable to withstand of the regime in the company, created under the influence of Tukhachevsky, expressed a desire to complain about the excessive demands of the sergeant major in the service, who appointed him recklessly to all regular and non-scheduled duties that had a harmful effect on the educational activities of the junker. These two conflicts, which as a result had only a transfer from school to school, ended happily.

Three junkers: Krasovsky, Yanovsky and Avdeev - according to the report were

transferred by the head of the school, Major General Genishta, to the 33rd category in behavior; unfortunate young men, proud and resolute, one by one in a short period (within two months) committed suicide. "Protection" for the transfer to the third category in behavior of the aforementioned junkers was exclusively sergeant major Tukhachevsky.

The deeds of the poor fellows, in general, were insignificant. Maybe the punishment will not seem so severe, but we must take into account that, like Tukhachevsky, the young men literally raved about military service and perceived each penalty as a life tragedy. Postoronkin writes what they were guilty of:

"Krasovsky went on a city vacation, having been subjected to the deprivation of leave personally by the sergeant major, and he decided to go to this extreme only after the sergeant deprive him of the right to leave for several weeks in a row, Avdeev went on vacation in an informal uniform purchased at his own expense, and although the duty officer the officer did not pay any attention to this circumstance, nevertheless, the sergeant major reported to the company commander and insisted on the strictest punishment from the guilty.

depressed by the fact that the sergeant-major punished him with non-attendance, did not allow him to go on a meeting with his sister who had come from the provinces. The sergeant-major could not cancel the penalty he had imposed, in spite of all the entreaties and arguments of the unfortunate cadet. Yanovsky, remaining in the company, shot himself in the washroom, and his corpse was discovered only after the evening roll call.

All this almost caused investigations by the main authorities of military educational institutions (probably, the leadership of the school managed to hush up the scandal, cover up the peculiar "hazing" of the young promising cadet sergeant major; in the same way they covered and even encouraged "hazing" in the Soviet, and then in the new Russian army. - B. S.). Nevertheless, the domineering and proud, but cold and balanced Tukhachevsky was constantly on his guard, sensitively looking around at everything that could in one way or another threaten his official "career".

This episode is strongly rejected by those who knew Tukhachevsky already in his service in the Red Army. They unanimously testify to the extraordinary politeness and correctness of Mikhail Nikolayevich, his concern for his subordinates, his constant readiness to help soldiers and commanders, including in solving purely everyday problems, and, accordingly, that Tukhachevsky was loved in the troops. But I think there is no contradiction here. It's just that when he was at the cadet school, Tukhachevsky was aware that at that moment his career advancement entirely depended on his superiors, and not on friendship with fellow junker students. Therefore, he demonstrated the maximum exactingness and exactingness, so that the fathers-commanders would appreciate it and not interfere with finishing school first. And this gave the right to freely choose vacancies, including in the guards regiments. For a native of a poor noble family who had no connections among the generals, this was, in fact, the only way to ensure a good career start. Later, when Tukhachevsky became a commander, he understood perfectly well that success depends on how much the soldiers and officers believe in their commander, in his luck and

willingness to take care of subordinates. It seems that by nature Tukhachevsky was not an evil person. And without a special need for that, he didn't do nasty things to people, all the more he didn't destroy them. True, there is no evidence that the young sergeant major at that time or subsequently felt remorse about the three comrades who committed suicide because of his nit-picking. However, we generally know very little about Tukhachevsky the Junker. After all, the vast majority of Mikhail Nikolayevich's fellow students, like Georgy Maslov, who suffered from him, laid down their lives in the battles of the First World War and civil war or disappeared into obscurity in emigration, without writing, because of the hardships of life in a foreign land, memories. So Postoronkin's testimony here is perhaps the only one.

We emphasize that Tukhachevsky's exactingness towards his school mates could be caused by no means only by career considerations, as the memoirist, who is partial to Mikhail Nikolayevich, claims. Tukhachevsky was, as they say, a military bone, truly lived in the interests of service, for the army, first the tsarist, and then the Red, literally "sick", taking all its worries and problems to heart. He dreamed of making the Russian troops invincible, he worked selflessly and demanded the same from his subordinates. Lydia Nord recalls how, already being Deputy People's Commissar of Defense, Tukhachevsky once called at four in the morning the head

Artillery of the Red Army to N. M. Rogovsky, sympathetically inquired: "Did you sleep?" - and, apologizing, set a far from the most urgent task: to organize an artillery run from Leningrad to Pskov and back. And in his younger years, at the school, Mikhail Nikolayevich, not yet having worldly experience, could well not measure his maximalist demands with possible tragic consequences.

When he was at the school, Tukhachevsky first saw the last Russian tsar. Vladimir Postoronkin described this significant event for all the junkers as follows:

"In the days of the Romanov celebrations (anniversary events on the occasion of the tercentenary of the Romanov dynasty in 1913. - B. S.), when the Alexander and Alekseevsky military schools had to carry out responsible and heavy guard duty in the Kremlin Palace during the arrival of the Sovereign Emperor with his family in Moscow, the sword-junker Tukhachevsky excellently, conscientiously and with honors performed the guard duties assigned to him.

Here, for the first time, Tukhachevsky was introduced to His Majesty, who drew attention to his service and especially to the really rare case for a junior cadet to receive a junker belt rank. The Sovereign expressed his pleasure after reading from the short report of the company commander on the service activities of the sword-junker Tukhachevsky.

This testimony seems to contradict the statements of Mikhail's sisters Elizaveta and Olga and friend Nikolai Kulyabko about his anti-monarchist sentiments back in his youth. However, if you think about it, there is no contradiction here. After all, Postoronkin was not closely acquainted with Tukhachevsky, and he; of course, he could not trust him with his innermost feelings. On the other hand, Michael was not so stupid as to demonstrate dislike for the tsar, standing on the guard of honor, even by careless performance of guard duties or public insolence when presented to the emperor. He always

performed exemplary, and even more so at such a crucial moment of the anniversary celebrations.

Both in the cadet corps and in the cadet school, Tukhachevsky remained a convinced atheist, although already, having learned from bitter experience in the Penza gymnasium, he did not publicly show his disbelief. The well-known musicologist, friend and biographer of the composer and pianist Sergei Taneyev, Leonid Sabaneyev, a member of the Tukhachevsky family, testified: Mikhail was a young man "very arrogant, Napoleon's postures, assimilated a haughty facial expression. Apparently, he was devoid of any principles whatever - there was something in him from "Dostoevism", rather from "Stavroginism". He, apparently, was preparing to become supermen. " Here, under the absence of principles, Sabaneev, who is unfriendly to Tukhachevsky, undoubtedly means the absence of religious, moral, Christian principles.

World War I and German captivity

On July 12, 1914, Mikhail Tukhachevsky graduated from the Alexander Military School first in academic performance and discipline. It was produced in

second lieutenants and, according to the rules, provided a free choice of duty station. Tukhachevsky, as bequeathed by the grandfather-general, preferred the Semenovsky regiment to the Life Guards. According to Tukhachevsky's uncle, Colonel Balkashin, his nephew was going to continue his military education: "He was very capable and ambitious, he intended to make a military career, he dreamed of entering the General Staff Academy." And there, you see, there is a direct road to generals, if, what the hell is not joking, not to field marshals. In the meantime, the freshly minted second lieutenant, having received 300 rubles of state money for equipment - a considerable amount for the Tukhachevskys - went to Vrazhskoye on vacation. But the vacation had to be interrupted before the deadline: mobilization and war were declared. Tukhachevsky was forced to hastily catch up with his regiment, which had set out for the Warsaw area. The young lieutenant was appointed junior officer (currently - deputy commander) of the 7th company of the 2nd battalion. The company was commanded by an experienced warrior, Captain Veselago, who volunteered to participate in the Russo-Japanese War. Soon the regiment was transferred to the region of Ivangorod and Lublin against the Austro-Hungarian troops. On September 2, 1914, the company of Veselago and Tukhachevsky under the Vikmundovo farm near the town of Krzheshov crossed the San River along the bridge set on fire by the Austrians, and then safely returned to the eastern bank with trophies and prisoners. For this feat, the company commander received the Order of St. George, 4th degree, the junior officer, the Order of St. Vladimir, 4th degree with swords. Then other battles followed with the Austrians and the German units that came to their aid.

Tukhachevsky distinguished himself several more times. His regimental comrade A. A. Tipolt, who commanded a platoon in the 6th company of the same 2nd battalion, recalled an incident that occurred in late September or early October 1914:

"The regiment occupied positions not far from Krakow, on the right bank of the Vistula. The Germans fortified on the dominant left bank. In front of our battalion in the middle of the Vistula there was a small sandy island. how the enemy is built

defense, do the Germans have many forces ... Not bad, but how to do it? Misha Tukhachevsky silently listened to such conversations and stubbornly thought about something. And then one day he got hold of a small fishing boat, the sides of which barely rose above the water, in the evening he lay down in it, pushed off the shore and quietly swam. All alone, he spent the whole night on the island, part of the morning, and safely returned to our shore, delivering the very information that the regiment so dreamed of.

In the fall of 1914, Tukhachevsky escaped to his family in Moscow for a couple of days in connection with the sudden death of his father. The sisters did not have time to inform Mikhail about this misfortune. He himself felt that something had happened at home, and knocked out a short vacation from his superiors. 1914 was a very unhappy year for the Tukhachevskys. In addition to Nikolai Nikolaevich, even before the start of the war, the daughter Nadia, a talented artist, a graduate of the Stroganov School, died, and her son Igor died. Two other sons, Nikolai and Alexander, were drafted into the army as ensigns in the same regiment as Mikhail Semenovsky. But they did not find their brother there.

Tukhachevsky fought bravely and skillfully. Awards did not bypass him. Later, already in the Red Army, Mikhail Nikolaevich noted that during the First World War he was awarded all the orders "from Anna PU degree to Vladimir PU degree inclusive." Few officers could

to boast of so many distinctions by the age of 22! On November 5, 1914, Tukhachevsky was wounded in a battle near the town of Skala and sent to a hospital in Moscow. Here he was met for the last time by V. Postoronkin, who recalled that Tukhachevsky

"He spoke especially enthusiastically about his military operations, that he was already known in the whole division. A spark of hidden annoyance shone in his eyes - his cherished dream of receiving the Order of St. George of the 4th degree did not come true."

The partiality of a witness who seeks to present Tukhachevsky to us only as an unprincipled careerist is immediately evident here. It is interesting how Postoronkin managed to see annoyance in the eyes of the wounded second lieutenant, if it was "hidden" and, as is clear from the text of his memoirs, Tukhachevsky did not say a word about his displeasure at receiving Vladimir instead of Georgy in a conversation with the memoirist? In addition, there is no evidence that the junior officer did not get along with the company commander, envied him, otherwise he would hardly have managed to receive so many awards in six months.

The St. George Cross was useful to the poor captain Veselago only once, and then after his death in the last battle for him and Tukhachevsky of the First World War.

Heavy fighting unfolded in the area of the Polish city of Lomza. They were later recalled by General P. N. Krasnov, who became Don Ataman in civilian life:

"There were terrible battles near Lomzha. The Guards infantry burned in them, like straw thrown in armfuls into a fire burns."

In those battles, Tukhachevsky's company was destined to burn out without a trace. On February 19, 1915, the Semyonovsky regiment took up positions in the forest in front of the village of Vysokie Duzhi, located on the road between the cities of Lomzha and Kolno. During the day, the Germans attacked the trenches of the Semenovites after powerful artillery preparation, but they could not capture them. Then at night they launched a surprise attack, broke through at the junction of two companies and surrounded the 7th company. IN

hand-to-hand combat, it was almost completely destroyed. The surviving soldiers and officers were taken prisoner. The Germans raised Captain Veselago, who jumped out of the dugout, on bayonets. Subsequently, more than twenty bayonet wounds were counted on his body. It was possible to identify the disfigured corpse of the company commander only by the St. George Cross, but the award served the same purpose. Tukhachevsky was more fortunate. At the time of the attack, he was sleeping in a shallow trench. Waking up, he tried to organize the resistance of his company, shot back from the attackers with a revolver, but was quickly knocked down, stunned and found himself captured. By order of the regiment dated February 27, 1915, Tukhachevsky, together with Veselago, were declared dead. Only a few months later, the family received a letter from Mikhail from Germany through the Red Cross. His mother and sisters were overjoyed at his "resurrection".

Tukhachevsky wrote cheerful letters so as not to disturb his relatives: "alive and well, everything is fine." And in one postcard he said with humor: "Today we were given honey, which tastes and color is similar to wax." Due to the naval blockade by the Entente, the population of Germany led a half-starved existence. The prisoners, even officers, were fed

rather scarcely, often as substitutes for natural products, such as ersatz coffee. Obviously, Mikhail had a chance to try ersatz honey - another fruit of German ingenuity in the era of "brilliantly organized famine", as the Germans themselves called the system of strict food rationing. In his letters to the sisters, Tukhachevsky advised to re-read The Tale of Igor's Campaign, hinting that, like the hero of an ancient poem, he was preparing to escape from captivity. But it was by no means hunger that pushed Mikhail Nikolayevich, like many other captured officers, to escape. He wanted to continue fighting, he believed in victory over Germany and its allies, he was eager to show his military skills, to find his Toulon on the battlefields.

Many years later, Tukhachevsky confessed to Lydia Nord:

"I was very happy about the war ... I dreamed of great deeds, but I was captured. But even before the capture, I had already received the Order of Vladimir with swords. In my heart I was very proud of this, but diligently concealed my feelings from others. And I was sure that I will also deserve the George Cross.

This revelation, by the way, is much more like the truth than Postoronkin's statements that Tukhachevsky perceived the awarding of Vladimir with swords as an insult, since he was counting on Georgy.

Five times Tukhachevsky tried to escape from captivity. Four attempts ended in failure. So, during the third escape from the officer camp in Bad Stuer, Tukhachevsky, together with ensign Filippov, got out from behind barbed wire in boxes with dirty linen. It took twenty-six days for the fugitives to reach the Dutch border, eating only what they managed to steal from the peasant gardens at night. Filippov was lucky to go to Holland, and Tukhachevsky was seized by the German border guards at the very goal. In the end, he was sent to the famous international camp in the 9th fort of the ancient Bavarian fortress of Ingolstadt, where the most incorrigible fugitives were brought from all over Germany. There were not only Russians here, but also the French, British, Italians, Belgians ... It was very difficult to escape from the casemates of the fort, but Tukhachevsky did not leave the thought of escaping from captivity at any cost. And helped others to escape. The French officer Goyce de Meiserac, who later rose to the rank of general, recalled how Tukhachevsky

agreed to name himself instead of him at the evening verification in order to cover the escape and give the fugitive, who got out of the fortress in a biscuit box, the opportunity to win the first, most expensive watch from the chase.

Mikhail Nikolaevich later said to his sister-in-law:

"The French officer, who was sitting with me in captivity in Ingolstadt, where I was brought after the fourth escape, when I again began to make escape plans, said: "You must be a maniac, aren't your unsuccessful attempts enough ... But the failures of the first escapes I was not discouraged, and I was preparing for a new one. I hated the Germans, as a beast caught in a cage hates trainers. The reasoning of my captive comrades, foreign officers, about the reasons for the failures of the Russo-Japanese campaign and our defeats in this war, infuriated me. Charter to think over an escape plan, I rested by mentally reorganizing our army, creating another one that was supposed to bring Germany to its knees, and make the whole world feel the power of Russia.

fight... Maybe then I was on the verge of insanity..."

Many years later, Tukhachevsky had the opportunity to make his dream come true, to create a new mass army equipped with the most advanced technology.

In Ingolstadt, Tukhachevsky had many interesting interlocutors. Here he met the French captain Charles de Gaulle, the future general and president of France, the founder of the Fifth Republic, who somewhat repeated the path of Bonaparte. De Gaulle, like Tukhachevsky, tried five times to escape from captivity, but all failed. In 1920, they had to meet again, already on opposite sides of the barricades, on the Vistula, where Tukhachevsky commanded the Western Front advancing on Warsaw, and de Gaulle, an officer of the French military mission in Poland, led the Polish infantry detachment, reinforced by several tanks. Subsequently, de Gaulle warmly recalled the young handsome second lieutenant of the guards, who struck him with energy and audacity both in the 9th Fort of Ingolstadt and on the battlefield near Warsaw.

Another Frenchman, Remy Roure, under the pseudonym Pierre Fervak, who published the first book about Tukhachevsky in 1928, adhered to anarchist views when he was in Ingolstadt. He talked a lot with the Russian lieutenant, for whom he felt sympathy. Fervak and Tukhachevsky often argued. The forced idleness of captivity prompted to find a way out in the intellectual game, in endless disputes about the ongoing war and disputes on world topics. A French officer later testified:

"They argued about Christianity and God, art and literature, about Beethoven, about Russia and the "Russian soul", about the Russian intelligentsia. The young Russian officer turned out to be an avid debater. \$\$\$", literally: "touch everything", which was also intended to emphasize the extensive, albeit slightly superficial, erudition of Tukhachevsky. - B.S.) ". Tukhachevsky told Fervak:

"A sense of proportion, which is an obligatory quality for the West, is our biggest shortcoming in Russia. We need desperate heroic strength, Eastern cunning and the barbaric breath of Peter the Great. Therefore, the attire of dictatorship is most suitable for us.

Latin and Greek culture is not for us! I consider the Renaissance, along with Christianity, one of the misfortunes of mankind ... Harmony and measure - that's what needs to be destroyed first of all!

According to Fervak, Tukhachevsky called himself a futurist and saw the future of art only in futurism and Dadaism close to it. That did not prevent him from bowing before Beethoven. It was with the "great deaf" that Tukhachevsky compared his homeland:

"Russia is like this great and unfortunate musician. She still does not know what kind of symphony she will give to the world, because she does not know herself either. She is still deaf, but you will see - one fine day everyone will be amazed by her..."

Dreams of military exploits naturally implied faith in the greatness of Russia - otherwise the country would not have a strong army, and without powerful armed forces at its disposal, no one would ever

managed to become a great commander. Tukhachevsky, on the other hand, clearly dreamed of the laurels of Napoleon.

Meanwhile, a revolution was brewing in Russia. Despite the paucity of information that reached the prisoners from there (only from German newspapers), Tukhachevsky foresaw it. Shortly before February 1917, he shared with Fervak his thoughts on the future of the Russian monarchy:

"Yesterday, we, Russian officers, drank to the health of the Russian emperor. Or maybe this dinner was a memorial dinner. Our emperor is a narrow-minded person ... And many officers are tired of the current regime ... However, a constitutional regime in the Western manner would be the end Russia, Russia needs a firm, strong government..."

But at first Tukhachevsky experienced the revolution itself and the decomposition of the Russian army that accompanied it very hard. He confessed to Lydia Nord:

"When I found out about the revolution and read in a German newspaper about the beginning of the collapse of the army, I took the newspaper, went to the dressing room, tore it to shreds there and ... wept ... Yes, I cried. But that night I had a dream, that Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaevich took the army into his own hands and is forming new units. The dream was so vivid and plausible that I believed him. Then the thought of escaping became completely intrusive."

The young lieutenant dreamed of a strong personality who could restore order in the country and in the army. But in this capacity, he considered not only the former Supreme Commander-in-Chief, Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolayevich, who was respected by a significant part of the officers, but removed by Nikolai II after the failures of 1915. Seeing the weakness of the democratic Provisional Government that replaced the tsar, Tukhachevsky once said to Fervak:

"If Lenin is able to rid Russia of the rubbish of old prejudices and help her become an independent, free and strong power, I will follow him."

On another occasion, he stated even more clearly:

"I choose Marxism!"

One evening Fervak and Tukhachevsky were reading Dostoyevsky in French. And when they got to the writer's reasoning about the future Slavic federation, Mikhail Nikolayevich said:

"Does it really matter whether we realize our ideal with propaganda or weapons? It must be realized - and this is the main thing. Russia's task now should be to eliminate everything: obsolete

art, obsolete ideas, all this old culture... With the help of Marxist formulas, you can raise the whole world! The right of peoples to self-determination! Here is the magic key that opens the doors to the East for Russia and locks them for England. Revolutionary Russia, preacher of the class struggle, extends its borders far beyond the border lines outlined by treaties... With a red banner, and not with a cross, we will enter Byzantium!

And later added:

"We will sweep away the dust of European civilization that has covered Russia, we will shake it up like a dusty rug, and then we will shake up the whole world!"

How consonant this is with the song that the Nazi stormtroopers sang in the early 30s:

Decrepit bones tremble

Land before the battle of the saints.

Drop doubts and shyness!

On the attack! And we will win!

There is no goal brighter and more desirable!

We will shatter the world!

Today we took Germany

Tomorrow we'll take the whole Earth!

So let the townsfolk bark

We listen to their nonsense funny!

Let the continents burn

And we will win - all the same! ..

Let the world turn into ruins

Everything will be turned upside down!

We are the rulers of the young earth

Let's rebuild our house!

(translated by Lev Ginzburg)

This song was written, by the way, right there, in Bavaria, by the poet Hans Baumann, who was consumed by poverty and grieved over the humiliation of Germany after the defeat in the First World War. Probably, Tukhachevsky also experienced similar experiences in Ingolstadt captivity, especially in the light of news of the failures and decay of the Russian army. He knew about the Bolsheviks even before the war from his friend Kulyabko. Now their program of the world revolution and building a new just society began to seem the only way to revive the greatness of Russia - after all, it was she who should have carried the torch of the great teaching to the whole world! Perhaps Sabaneev is right: Tukhachevsky was attracted to Nietzsche's superman, and in Dostoevsky, one of his favorite writers, Mikhail was attracted not by criticism of the Napoleonic complex, but by the idea of Russian messianism.

If we replace Germany with Russia in Bauman's song, then you, my reader, could well assume that it was not the members of the Hitler Youth who sang it, but the Komsomol members of the 20s. Tukhachevsky in Ingolyptadt was 23, Bauman, when he wrote "Decrepit Bones", - 19. Both had faith,

that the youth is destined to destroy the old world of decrepit European civilization and build on its ruins a new, bright world. Tukhachevsky was attracted by the bewitching:

We will destroy the whole world of violence

To the bottom and then

We are ours, we will build a new world!

Who was nothing will become everything!

To destroy, a powerful army was required, at the head of which new generals were to replace the royal ones. And it was quite possible to repeat the success of Napoleon. I think that already in Ingolstadt Tukhachevsky internally made a choice in favor of the Bolsheviks. I foresaw that the Kerensky government would not last long. And he strove to get to Russia as soon as possible, at any cost, in order to take part in the impending great, truly historical events.

After the February Revolution in Russia, pogroms of landowners' estates and unauthorized seizure of noble lands by peasants began. Some officers in Ingolstadt, who had estates, were indignant at the behavior of the "rebellious mob." Tukhachevsky ardently argued that the land should belong to those who work on it. The upbringing was in the Decembrist spirit. Yes, and with the peasants, as we remember, the Tukhachevskys lived in perfect harmony, and the estate in Vrazhsky had already been mortgaged and remortgaged so many times that no expropriation could cause great damage to its owners.

In the end, an opportunity presented itself to escape. On the basis of an international agreement, the prisoners were allowed to walk in the city, provided that they give a written commitment not to try to escape during the walks. A. V. Blagodatov, who was together with Tukhachevsky in the Ingolstadt camp, (later - lieutenant general of the Soviet Army), describes the circumstances of the last, successful escape as follows:

"Tukhachevsky and his comrade Captain of the General Staff Chernyavsky somehow managed to arrange that others signed their documents. And one day they both fled. For six days the fugitives wandered through the forests and fields, hiding from the chase. However, the hardy and physically strong Tukhachevsky escaped from his pursuers... After a while he managed to cross the Swiss border and thus return to his homeland, while Captain Chernyavsky was sent back to the camp.

For a long time we did not know anything about the fate of Mikhail Nikolayevich and were very worried about him. About a month after the escape, one of the Swiss newspapers read that the corpse of a Russian had been found on the shores of Lake Geneva, apparently from exhaustion. For some reason, everyone decided that it was Tukhachevsky. A memorial service was held in the camp. In the absence of a Russian priest, she was served by a French curate."

So Tukhachevsky was buried for the second time. Meanwhile, he kept his way to Paris, from there to London, and then by sea to Scandinavia and by train to Petrograd. Let's leave the lucky fugitive to enjoy

freedom and make a small memoir digression.

In September 1993, exactly 76 years after Tukhachevsky was able to leave the not too hospitable 9th Fort, I happened to attend an international conference of military historians in the glorious city of Ingolstadt, known throughout the world, including in Russia, cars of the concern "Audi" (until 1945 - "Horch"). We visited the fortress, for which we had to overcome a moat with water over a drawbridge. It now houses the Bavarian War Museum. On that day, its director, a true enthusiast of his work, rejoiced at a new valuable acquisition: the relatives of Field Marshal Walter Model handed over

to the museum his gilded marshal's baton. And I involuntarily compared the fates of the two commanders, whose traces so unexpectedly intersected under the vaults of the Ingolstadt fortress. Model was one of two German field marshals who committed suicide in the days of Germany's defeat without surviving the surrender of their armies in the Ruhr pocket. The second was Ritter Robert von Greim, the last general promoted by Hitler to field marshal and who replaced Goering, accused of treason, as commander-in-chief of the Luftwaffe. By the way, with the exception of Wilhelm Keitel, not a single German field marshal or grand admiral was executed by the victors. Keitel, on the other hand, was let down by the "bad position" of the chief of staff of the Supreme High Command (in fact, the minister of war): here are the criminal "order on commissars" and instructions on the inhuman treatment of prisoners of war, and complicity in genocide. The model is not guilty of war crimes. And he carried out the "scorched earth" tactics in such a way that the civilian population did not suffer. For example, when the 9th Army of the Model left the Rzhev-Vyazemsky bridgehead in the spring of 1943, not only all household supplies were evacuated to the rear, but also the Russian population, so as not to doom them to starvation. Model's biographer, General Horst Grossmann, wrote of the end of the field marshal, who was not afraid to argue with Hitler himself:

"At his own request, Model was buried among his soldiers. He always found the meaning of his existence in serving the people. Captivity, barbed wire, prison walls, shame and humiliation awaited him. His warm heart could not bear it, so he remained on his last field battles"

(by the way, having managed to send older soldiers and boys from the Hitler Youth home by order, and when the medicines ran out, then everyone else, so that they tried to avoid captivity).

Tukhachevsky, as we will soon see, carried out the tactics of "scorched earth" much more severely more than twenty years earlier than Model, in the Tambov province, where not only peasant huts were burned, but their inhabitants were mercilessly shot, and poisonous gases poisoned those who fled into the forests. The "Red Marshal" had the courage to argue both with the People's Commissar for Defense Voroshilov and with Stalin himself, but the courage to avoid a shameful trial and execution, to shoot himself at the moment when he realized that the clouds above his head had finally closed the sky, was not enough, just as there was not enough courage reject fantastic accusations in court and, in the face of imminent death, defend their innocence, honor and dignity. Here we recall another German field marshal, Erwin von Witzleben, who participated in the conspiracy against Hitler and at the trial, mockingly called "people's", knowing full well that he was waiting for the gallows, defending the rightness

conspirators and the noble goals that drove them. For Tukhachevsky, the concept of officer honor was eroded very early - even then, in the 17th, in Ingolstadt, when he fled, breaking his promise - a comedy with the substitution of signatures does not change the matter, yes, maybe the episode itself, when for Chernyavsky and Tukhachevsky was signed by others, generally invented in order to ennoble at least a little bit the not at all noble act of the future marshal. After all, Tukhachevsky could not but understand that his escape, connected with the violation of an officer's word of honor, would inevitably cause a tightening of the regime, in particular a ban on walking into the city, and a deterioration

the situation of other prisoners in Ingolstadt. His less happy comrade Chernyavsky, before being returned to the camp, was pretty crushed by the gendarmes, in retaliation for his meanness. Tukhachevsky was lucky. And there is no evidence that he experienced pangs of conscience, substituting those with whom he shared the hardships of captivity.

On September 5/18, Tukhachevsky managed to cross the German-Swiss border. On September 29 (October 12), 1917, exhausted by hungry wanderings, but not losing his presence of mind, the second lieutenant came to the Russian military agent (in today's terminology - military attache) General Count A. A. Ignatiev, who later also went over to the Bolsheviks and became, along with Alexei Tolstoy, another "red count". This day is dated Ignatiev's letter to the military agent General N. S. Yermolov in London:

"At the request of Lieutenant Tukhachevsky, who escaped from German captivity of the Semenovskiy Guards Regiment, I was ordered to give him money in the amount necessary for a trip to London. I also ask you not to refuse to help him in his further journey."

Already on October 16, Tukhachevsky ended up in Petrograd, where he appeared to continue his service in the reserve battalion of the Semenovskiy regiment. And then he got a vacation home to improve his health. In Vrazhskiy, he was caught by the greatest event in the history of Russia of the twentieth century - the October Revolution, which decisively influenced the fate of our hero.

"On that far, on the civilian"

Tukhachevsky returned to the capital on November 20 - twelve days after the capture of the Winter Palace and the overthrow of the Kerensky government. The soldiers elected a young and determined second lieutenant as a company commander (the reserve company was larger in number than an ordinary infantry battalion). In the Semyonovskiy regiment, the influence of the Socialist-Revolutionaries was strong, the slogan "All power to the Constituent Assembly!" was very popular. Tukhachevsky, it seems, by that time had finally taken the side of the winners - the Bolsheviks. Tipolt, who at that time served in the reserve battalion of the Semyonovskiy regiment, recalled how his friend behaved:

"It so happened that my room turned into a kind of regimental club. Officers, non-commissioned officers, soldiers crowded here. Noise, disputes, clouds of tobacco smoke. The impression is that everyone woke up after many years of hibernation and everyone should immediately receive answers to the questions that have tormented us all in recent months. Mikhail listened intently to our polemics, but was in no hurry to express himself. It was felt that intense inner work was going on in him. Eternal, it seemed, truths were dying off. New views were born, and he took them close to heart. Perhaps it was at this time that the decisions that determined him

further, well-known fate."

I think that Fervak is not lying in his memoirs, and the decision to go over to the Bolsheviks began to take shape with Tukhachevsky back in Ingolstadt. Another thing is that Mikhail Nikolaevich, with his inherent diplomacy, preferred not to openly express his views among the officers and soldiers of his native regiment, in the majority hostile to the new government. There is no information about Tukhachevsky's participation in the dispersal of the Constituent Assembly. Perhaps then he had not yet acted together with the Bolsheviks. And most likely, Tukhachevsky was no longer in Petrograd in those fateful days in early January 1918. About his departure from the city to

at the end of the 17th (the sisters recalled that in December) or at the very beginning of the 18th year, the memories of the wife of the commander of the reserve battalion of the Semenovskiy regiment, Colonel Brzhozovskiy Lidia, lived out her life in Paris:

"In 1917, Tukhachevsky had breakfast with us, in the wing of the Semenovskiy regiment ... Tukhachevsky made the most gratifying and indelible impression on me. Beautiful radiant eyes, a charming smile, great modesty and restraint. At breakfast, my husband joked and drank to the health of Napoleon, to which Tukhachevsky only smiled. He himself drank little. After breakfast, my husband, I and several of our officers went to see him off at the station, as he was leaving for Moscow. He was dressed in a black civilian coat and a high astrakhan hat, which increased his height "After previous conversations, I was full of enthusiasm and for some reason it seemed to me that he was capable of becoming a "Hero". In any case, he was above the crowd. I rarely make mistakes in people, and it was especially hard for me when I later found out that he seemed to have become quite sincerely a Bolshevik. Still, there was a doubt in my heart that this was not so. After the second call, in the second class department, I told him when we parted: "Goodbye! I bless you for Great Deeds!" I kissed him on the forehead and, three times, smalllly crossed myself. He kissed my hand, looked at me with a sincere serious look and said: "I'll try." The train started after the third bell. Tukhachevsky stood at the window and looked seriously and sadly on us ... I never saw him again. He did not return to St. Petersburg. "

Something, but to make an impression, to please people, and especially women, Mikhail Nikolayevich knew how. At the same time, he had enough caution and tact not to talk about his intention to serve with the Bolsheviks, especially not out of fear, but out of conscience, to the Brzhozovskiy couple, who clearly had a negative attitude towards Soviet power. Then Tukhachevsky did not yet hold any significant posts, but those around him already felt in him the makings of a future "Napoleon", "Hero", exalted him above the "crowd". At the same time, the young lieutenant made an impression, despite his age, of a serious, positive person who knows the value of himself and others. He did not at all look like an adventurer intending to use the revolutionary turmoil for a career and enrichment. And women liked Tukhachevsky very much. Even from the recollections of Brzhozovskiy, who only fleetingly knew him, it is clear that many years later she retained the most tender feelings for Tukhachevsky, despite his transfer to the opposite camp, and the scene of their farewell at the station is very reminiscent of the parting of two people who love each other.

If there was a calculation when Tukhachevsky entered the Bolsheviks, then it was connected with their ability, which our hero saw very early

(it seems, back in Ingolstadt), to revive over time the greatness of Russia and its army. He sincerely believed that with Lenin, Trotsky and other Bolshevik leaders he would always be on the way. He believed that in the future the Russian army on bayonets would be able to bring happiness to all mankind, and hoped to lead it sooner or later. The old army was dead, Tukhachevsky saw it well. All hopes for the revival of the armed forces of Russia, the lieutenant-semenovets now associated with the party of Lenin.

From Petrograd, Tukhachevsky again returned to Vrazhskoye, where he helped

to his mother and sisters in the household, in particular, he prepared enough firewood so that the family could survive the harsh winter.

Tukhachevsky arrived in Moscow in early March 1918, almost simultaneously with the Soviet government that moved here from Petrograd, threatened by the renewed offensive by the Germans. Contradictory evidence has been preserved about the beginning of his career under the new government. A close friend of Tukhachevsky N. N. Kulyabko stated:

"We met again only in March 1918 .. He had already worked in the Military Department of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee. And the PPU of the Extraordinary All-Russian Congress of Soviets elected me a member of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee. After the government moved from Petrograd to Moscow, I was appointed military commissar of the Moscow defense headquarters, then became deputy Chairman of the All-Russian Bureau of Military Commissars. These days, our friendly relations with Mikhail Nikolayevich just resumed. "

Here, Nikolai Nikolaevich can be completely trusted: in his memoirs, he by no means sought to minimize the importance of his acquaintance with Tukhachevsky for the success of the latter's career (we will see this later). On the other hand, due to the positions held, Kulyabko should have been aware of where and when the future "red Napoleon" began to serve the Soviets. The words of a friend of Tukhachevsky refute, in particular, the legend created by Roman Gul that as early as January 18, in Petrograd, in the Tauride Palace, immediately after the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly, Kulyabko, allegedly already being a member of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, met with Tukhachevsky, and a few days he took him to Smolny and recommended him for work in the military department. Gul even ascribes to Mikhail Nikolayevich a "historical phrase", at the same time slightly

raising him in rank:

"Guard Lieutenant Tukhachevsky escaped from German captivity to join the ranks of the Russian revolution!"

In fact, the PU Extraordinary Congress of Soviets, at which Kulyabko became a member of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, was held in Moscow from March 14 to March 16, 1918. Obviously, soon after the congress, the first meeting of old friends after many years of separation took place. Nikolai Nikolaevich does not write anything about the fact that Tukhachevsky, upon arrival in Moscow, stayed at his apartment, which some biographers of the marshal insist on. On the contrary, Kulyabko emphasizes that Tukhachevsky entered the service in the Military Department of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee even before their meeting, and not after. Maybe the young lieutenant had some other patron among the old members of the party. Lidia Nord claims that he was none other than the leader of the Samara Bolsheviks Valerian Vladimirovich Kuibyshev:

"Fate pushed Tukhachevsky with Nikolai Vladimirovich Kuibyshev (Valerian's brother, captain of the tsarist army, who later became a commander in the Red Army and was shot in 1938, as part of the purge initiated by the Tukhachevsky case. - B.S.) in 1918 at the station in Moscow. And this chance meeting determined the future fate of the marshal. N. V. Kuibyshev dragged him to his place and introduced him to his brother. Senior Kuibyshev, guessing and appreciating the extraordinary nature of Tukhachevsky, tried to persuade him for three days to join the Bolsheviks. He brought him together with senior officers who had already crossed over to the Reds, and when Tukhachevsky was recruited, V.V. Kuibyshev used all his influence in the party to nominate the young lieutenant to a responsible

military post. He himself vouched for Tukhachevsky and found other guarantors for him."

Three days, during which Kuibyshev Sr. allegedly persuaded Tukhachevsky to go over to the Bolsheviks, very much looks like a fabulous "three days, three nights." But in itself there is nothing supernatural in the meeting between Mikhail Tukhachevsky and Valerian Kuibyshev. V.V. Kuibyshev really was in Moscow in March 1918 (quite likely together with his brother Nikolai), participating on the 6th - 8th in the work of the Extraordinary Party Congress, and on the 14th -16th - in the work of the Technical University Extraordinary Congress of Soviets. Both the Kuibyshev brothers and Tukhachevsky came from intelligent noble families, professional soldiers (Valerian studied at the Military Medical Academy before the revolution and was seriously interested in military affairs all his life) and could easily find a common language. True, there is no other evidence of such an early acquaintance of Tukhachevsky with the Kuibyshevs, and in the obituary essay "Friend of the Red Army", dedicated to the memory of V. V. Kuibyshev, Mikhail Nikolayevich does not say anything about the time of their acquaintance. But it may very well be that it was the Kuibyshev recommendation that opened the doors for Tukhachevsky to the Military Department of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, which was engaged in the formation of the newly created Red Army. And, most likely, the former guards lieutenant said there something like what Roman Gul's fantasy attributed to him. But it is unlikely that one or two revolutionary phrases were enough to ensure such a rapid start in the career of yesterday's prisoner of Ingolstadt. Some serious protection was needed. Apparently, acquaintance with the elder Kuibyshev and Kulyabko was quite enough for a successful start to the service of Soviet power.

Lydia Nord gives a story-confession of her brother-in-law about how and why he began to serve in the Red Army:

"When I got to Petrograd, I didn't even have a thought about going over to the Bolsheviks. All my thoughts were occupied by the army, which was supposed to restore order in the country and beat the Germans on the neck (whom Mikhail Nikolayevich especially did not like after the hardships of captivity. - B. S.). I fiercely hated Kerensky and everyone who ruined the army. In my opinion, it was not too late then to gather strength and, having overthrown the Provisional Government, establish a military dictatorship. When I spoke about this, they answered me absently: "Yes .. Yes ... It can save Russia ... "Noah was only a lieutenant, a "clicker", and no one seriously considered my opinion. I didn't have to talk to the generals, but the more different other meetings I had, the stronger there was disappointment. At the top there was either lostness or verbiage, and we, young officers, full of strength and determination, were forced to do nothing and be subjected to humiliation. Peter was more alien to me than Moscow, and I hoped that in Moscow there was a different spirit, - went there, but there was the same chaos and confusion

thoughts.

Do not think that it was so easy for me to choose a different path in life ... But when I was with the Kuibyshevs, I felt that they understood me there and that my plans for the army that I had in captivity did not seem to them the delirium of a madman . Only the elder Kuibyshev laid a different foundation for this army. And no matter how eloquent Valerian Vladimirovich was, I confess that at that time I understood very little about politics and understood only one thing: here people not only live by their ideas, but also act. They want the good of the people and order, but the good and peace

guarded by the army. This is how Nikolai Kuibyshev understood it. As soon as I agreed, I was immediately dragged to different places, and I was convinced that many senior officers and even some generals chose the same path as I. My heart immediately felt better ... But then I did not count on the general's position, which I received thanks to the recommendation of Valerian Vladimirovich Kuibyshev. "

To his sister-in-law, Tukhachevsky explained his transition to the Bolsheviks in a slightly different way than earlier to Fervak, but basically the testimonies of the two memoirists do not contradict each other. It is possible that before the anarchist Remy Ruhr, the future marshal did not consider it necessary to hide his interest in Marxism and Lenin, his growing willingness to accept the Bolshevik program. But to a noblewoman from the "former" who did not feel any sympathy for the Marxist doctrine, the patriotic motives for serving the communists as the only real force for the revival of the country and the army, establishing, as it seemed, calm and order in the future, were much clearer.

Soon after Tukhachevsky got a job in the Military Department of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, a very important event took place in his life - joining the ranks of the RCP (b). This was not without the assistance of Kulyabko, and possibly Kuibyshev. True, on the day of April 5, 1918, when Tukhachevsky was accepted into the party, Valerian Vladimirovich was already in Samara, but it is not excluded. that even earlier he had selected Tukhachevsky other references besides Kulyabko. Nikolai Nikolaevich, on the other hand, recalled the circumstances under which the former second lieutenant and pillar nobleman joined the Bolshevik Party:

"I saw that he was already firmly standing on the positions of the Bolsheviks, I heard his enthusiastic comments about Vladimir Ilyich and therefore suggested that he join the ranks of the Communist Party. Mikhail Nikolaevich Tukhachevsky was deeply moved by this proposal. He thought it over very seriously and agreed.

Together we went to the Khamovnichesky District Committee of the Party, which was then located, it seems, on the Arbat. I gave MN Tukhachevsky a verbal recommendation and confirmed it in writing. He did this without the slightest hesitation, firmly believing that by becoming a communist, Mikhail Nikolayevich would bring even greater benefit to the Soviet government, which was in great need of dedicated military specialists.

Such an early entry into the party - at the end of the fifth month of Soviet power - opened up great prospects for Tukhachevsky. After all, there were only a few regular officers in the party at that time (the most famous examples here are V. A. Antonov-Ovseenko and N. V. Krylenko). The German offensive, which resumed in February, and the civil war that had already begun on the outskirts, demanded an early

revival of the regular army. Just then, an opportunity turned up, about which Kulyabko writes: "In the All-Russian Bureau of Military Commissars, personnel were then selected for the so-called Western Veil (grouping of troops designed to protect the Center of Russia from a possible German invasion. - B.S.). At my suggestion, M. N. Tukhachevsky was appointed military commissar of the Moscow region of the Western Veil. And when the rebellion of the White Czechs broke out on the Volga, I had the opportunity to report Tukhachevsky to V. I. Lenin. Vladimir Ilyich became very interested in him and asked to bring in a "communist lieutenant." Kulyabko himself was not present during Tukhachevsky's conversation with Lenin, but

the words of a friend conveyed the content of the conversation with the leader: "Vladimir Ilyich immediately asked him two questions: under what circumstances did he escape from German captivity and how does he look at the construction of a new socialist army? Tukhachevsky replied that he could not remain in captivity when revolutionary events, and then began to express in detail his thoughts about how to unite the disparate Red Guard detachments into a real regular army.

In the documents of the Council of People's Commissars, Lenin's meeting with Tukhachevsky in April or May 1918 was not recorded. On this basis, some historians generally doubt that it took place. However, it must be borne in mind that in the first months the office of the Council of People's Commissars worked far from the bureaucratic ideal of the 1930s and hardly recorded all the contacts of the head of government in practice. Lenin could well meet with Tukhachevsky, given the position of the latter - the military commissar of the Moscow Defense District, on whose territory the Council of People's Commissars was located and on whose stability the fate of the government directly depended. If the meeting, which Kulyabko wrote about, nevertheless took place, then the favorable impression made by Mikhail Nikolaevich on Vladimir Ilyich could contribute to the fact that Tukhachevsky received a responsible command post on the front of the fight against the rebellious Czechoslovak corps, whose uprising in the Volga region, in the Urals and in Siberia began on May 25.

Perhaps, by the time of Tukhachevsky's service in the Military Department of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, there is a funny incident that Sabaneev told about: "He drafted a project for the destruction of Christianity and the restoration of ancient paganism as a natural religion. A memorandum to declare paganism the state religion in the RSFSR was filed "Tukhachevsky in the Council of People's Commissars. He obviously scoffed, but in the Small Council of People's Commissars his project was put on the agenda and seriously discussed. Tukhachevsky needed only this, he was happy, like a schoolboy who succeeded in a prank." Such a joke vividly demonstrated Tukhachevsky's atheism and certainly pleased the members of the Council of People's Commissars. According to Sabaneev, on another occasion, Tukhachevsky, together with his music teacher N. S. Zhilyaev, "composed something like a" Bolshevik mass," some kind of Marxist service, which they called "Marxist five-o'clockia ". Apparently, it was some kind of comic prayer, as obligatory for the faithful Bolsheviks for daily performance as for the British

traditional tea at five o'clock in the evening - "five-o'clock". And this parody of the Christian religion should have impressed, at least, the educated Bolsheviks And did

commissioner-blasphemer from the nobles to "his own".

Yes, yes, I did not make a reservation. Tukhachevsky also had to work as a commissar, though for a short time. Since May 27, as a military commissar, he oversaw the activities of the military leader of the Moscow Defense District, the former general of the imperial army A.K. Bayov, a well-known military theorist. The general really needed an eye and an eye. Bayov later went over to the whites and emigrated. But Tukhachevsky was no longer with him. "Second Lieutenant-Communist" very soon received a new appointment. On June 19, 1918, he was sent to the Eastern Front, the most dangerous at that moment for Soviet power, with the following mandate:

"The bearer of this, the military commissar of the Moscow region, Mikhail Nikolayevich Tukhachevsky, was seconded to the command of the commander-in-chief of the Eastern Front Muravyov for the use of work of exceptional importance in organizing and forming the Red Army in the highest military formations and commanding them."

On June 27, Tukhachevsky arrived from Kazan, where the headquarters of the front was located, to the Inza station to take up the post of commander of the 1st Revolutionary Army. This army had yet to be formed from disparate detachments.

There is no doubt that Lenin's disposition towards Tukhachevsky, the recommendations given to him by the old Bolshevik Kulyabko, and possibly Kuibyshev, as well as his quick entry into the party, meant a lot at the beginning of his military career in the Red Army. But if the young second lieutenant did not really possess organizational and military abilities, his star would immediately set. The time was such that the appointment of commanders by acquaintance or patronage, regardless of their professional qualities, did not make sense: after all, the threat to the existence of Soviet power was more than real. In fact, the Council of People's Commissars did not have an army, since the old army had already collapsed, and the new one was just being created. In the west, vast areas were occupied by Germany and Austria-Hungary. In the east, significant territories came under the control of the Czechoslovak corps and the Committee of the Constituent Assembly (Komuch) supported by it, where the right SRs prevailed. The Bolsheviks were required to make vigorous efforts and decisive measures in order to retain power. On the way to the front, Tukhachevsky arrived in Penza, recently abandoned by the Czechoslovaks. This city has long become home to Tukhachevsky. Five high school years passed here, which, in the light of subsequent events, should have been perceived as serene. Here, at the gymnasium balls, Mikhail met his first love. And now, having arrived in Penza already in the position of commander, he married his beloved. The first wife of Tukhachevsky was Maria Vladimirovna Ignatieva, the daughter of the driver of the Penza depot. Mikhail followed in the footsteps of his father, linking his fate with a beloved girl not from the nobility. Maria accompanied him on the fronts of the civil war. However, this marriage did not last long. According to a former colleague and friend of Tukhachevsky, General N. I. Koritsky, who studied with him at the Penza gymnasium, M. V. Ignatieva "died tragically in Smolensk in 1920." Lydia Nord also reports rumors spreading in Smolensk at the end of 1920 that Tukhachevsky's first wife committed suicide and that her husband was not even at the funeral, instructing his adjutant to take care of them. Roman Gul speaks in most detail about the circumstances of Maria Vladimirovna's suicide:

"Perhaps Marusya would never have taken the fatal step, but the Russian revolutionary famine in a lousy, frozen country was terrible. And the wife of the commander Tukhachevsky can go to her husband by an emergency train, they will give her guards and the Red Army and will not be searched like a sack trader. Marusya out of love for her parents, like a woman, she carried bags of flour and cans home to Penza. Otherwise, the enemies tracked down (enemies near Tukhachevsky are a dime a dozen) - the Revolutionary Military Council of the front became aware of the bags. with rice, flour, cans lucky

in a hungry country, the wife of a victorious commander?!

I think that listening to the "Red Symphony" and looking not at the heavenly stars, but at his own, Tukhachevsky first of all became aesthetically unbearable from these bags (just like Dostoevsky - there are shameful crimes! - B.S.). A world fire, the tactics of the world proletarian war, and suddenly bags of flour for malnourished father-in-law and mother-in-law! What bad taste!

Tukhachevsky explained to his wife: the citizens of the RSFSR do not need a church divorce, and she is free. Marusya was a simple woman, but then she acted in such a way so as not to shock her husband: she shot herself on his train. The enemies who reported on Tukhachevsky were put to shame, and Tukhachevsky married again.

It is difficult to say what is here from the writer's fantasy, what is from unreliable rumors, and what is from the true tragedy that occurred in the saloon car of the commander of the Western Front. As we will see later, Tukhachevsky's enemies did write to higher authorities about the "bags" of food that the commander and his wife and his headquarters used for their needs, but this was long before the arrival of the Tukhachevsky couple in Smolensk and could hardly have been a reason for Maria's suicide. Perhaps the cause of the tragedy was Mikhail's infatuation with some other woman? After all, the weaker sex was crazy about Tukhachevsky, and the former lieutenant of the guards gave so many of his representatives his favor. In any case, Tukhachevsky really did not grieve for the death of Marusya for a very short time and, as we shall see, he married again very soon. But we've jumped ahead two years. Let's go back to Inza, where Tukhachevsky is rapidly creating the 1st Revolutionary Army.

Already in early July, the young commander managed to form the first regular divisions - Penza, Inza and Simbirsk, which subsequently received numbers - 20, 15 and 24, respectively. All of them, and especially the 24th Zheleznaya, led by G. D. Gai, became famous on the fronts of the civil war as the most persistent and combat-ready formations. To equip the troops with command personnel, Tukhachevsky and the head of the Simbirsk communists, I. M. Vareikis, for the first time issued an order to mobilize officers. It was published on July 4, 1918. The appearance of this order was preceded by a conversation between Tukhachevsky and Vareikis, which is quoted by one of the memoirists, B.N. Chistov, who was present with him:

"We have several thousand officers in Simbirsk," Vareikis said. "Only a few of them went to the Red Army. Most are waiting.

few, only the sons of landowners and merchants."

Tukhachevsky picked up this idea:

"I know the mood of the officers. There are notorious White Guards among them. But there are also those who sincerely love their people, their homeland. We must help them go with the people, and not against it."

"Helped", however, through the tribunals. The commander's order read:

"To create a combat-ready army, experienced leaders are needed, and therefore I order all former officers living in the Simbirsk province to immediately become under the Reds

the banners of the army entrusted to me. Today, this July 4th, officers living in the city of Simbirsk are to arrive at the building of the Cadet Corps by 12 o'clock, to see me. Those who do not appear will be subject to a court-martial."

Those officers who obeyed and arrived on time at the appointed place could see a new candidate for Napoleon. Here is how his friend Koritsky described Tukhachevsky that day:

"He was sitting in a tightly strapped tunic with traces of epaulettes on his shoulders, in dark blue, heavily worn trousers, in yellow boots with windings. Nearby on the table lay a kind of headdress, which had the shape of either a fire helmet, or a helmet, and brown gloves. Mikhail Nikolayevich's manners, his politeness revealed in him a well-mannered person. He had neither fanfare, nor arrogance, nor arrogance. He behaved evenly with everyone, but without familiarity, with a sense of his own dignity. "

Mikhail Nikolayevich, as we see, was dressed rather poorly, probably wearing the uniform issued before the capture. But he still remained fit and elegant in his own way.

The officers saw in the commander a man of their environment, Tukhachevsky's politeness and correctness made a favorable impression on them and facilitated the adoption of a psychologically difficult decision to join the Red Army. Moreover, the alternative was either execution, or, at best, vegetating for odd jobs - after all, the vast majority of officers had no other profession other than military.

Later, Tukhachevsky defended his priority not only in attracting military specialists, but also in organizing repressions, without which it is impossible to build an army in wartime:

"... For the first time in the 1st Army, army and divisional military revolutionary tribunals were introduced. The establishment of the tribunals finally consolidated the establishment of discipline."

Very soon, Tukhachevsky's troops achieved their first successes. On July 8, 1918, he telegraphed Kulyabko to Moscow, wishing to share the joy of victory with a friend: "The carefully prepared operation of the First Army ended brilliantly. The Czechoslovaks were defeated. Syzran was taken from battle." However, the offensive did not develop due to the ensuing

dramatic events during which Tukhachevsky almost died. Against Moscow, the commander-in-chief of the Eastern Front, the Left Social Revolutionary and former lieutenant colonel M. A. Muravyov, rebelled. This was a response to the suppression of the speech of his party comrades in Moscow on 6 July. Here is how Tukhachevsky described Muravyov in his memoir article "The First Army in 1918":

"Ants was distinguished by frenzied ambition, remarkable personal courage and the ability to electrify the masses of soldiers ... The thought of "becoming Napoleon" haunted him, and this definitely showed through in all his manners, conversations and actions. He did not know how to assess the situation. His tasks were completely lifeless. He did not know how to manage. He interfered in trifles, even commanded companies. He fawned over the Red Army soldiers. To win their love for himself, he allowed them to rob with impunity, used the most shameless demagoguery, etc. He was extremely cruel. In general, Muravyov's abilities were many times inferior to the scale of his claims. He was a selfish adventurer, and

Nothing more".

Did not come out of Muravyov Napoleon. Tukhachevsky is right: Mikhail Artemyevich turned out to be a useless leader of the rebellion (a successful rebellion, as you know, is called a revolution), he failed to correctly assess the situation and even competently conduct propaganda among his soldiers. On July 11, having arrived in Simbirsk to meet with Tukhachevsky, Muravyov suggested that the commander of the First stop the fight against the Czechs and the People's Army of Komuch, support the declaration of war on Germany, and if the Council of People's Commissars does not approve these actions, then, having united with the Czechoslovak corps, march on Moscow to overthrow the power of Lenin and then the creation of a new front against the Germans. Tukhachevsky refused and was immediately arrested by the Red Army soldiers who came with Muravyov. The Commander-in-Chief, with insanely sparkling eyes, joyfully declared to the commander:

"I raise the banner of insurrection, make peace with the Czechoslovaks and declare war on Germany."

Then Muraviev went to occupy the Simbirsk Soviet. The troops that supported the commander-in-chief did not know that he had betrayed the Soviet government, and thought that Muravyov was acting in agreement with Moscow. When the deception was revealed, the song of the brave lieutenant colonel was sung. After Muravyov's departure, the soldiers gathered without delay and with unnecessary ceremonies to "discharge" Tukhachevsky. He speaks of his salvation thus:

"The Red Army men wanted to shoot me immediately, but they were extremely surprised when, to the question of some, for what I was arrested, I answered them: "For being a Bolshevik." They were greatly taken aback and answered: "Why, we are also Bolsheviks." A conversation began. Hearing about the Left SR uprising in Moscow and having received an explanation of Muravyov's betrayal, the remaining Red Army soldiers immediately elected a delegation and sent it to the armored division to discuss the issue.

Tukhachevsky was released. In the meantime, Vareikis concentrated a Latvian detachment loyal to the Bolsheviks in the building of the provincial executive committee and invited Muravyov to negotiations. The commander-in-chief appeared with an armed retinue, but did not notice the ambush. When the negotiations reached an impasse, Muravyov with threatening words: "Then I'll talk to you differently!" - rushed to the door to the corridor, where his guards remained. And I saw that the retinue was already

disarmed and Latvians are standing around with fixed bayonets. With a cry of "Betrayal!" Mikhail Artemyevich managed to draw his Mauser and fire three times, wounding two before he was killed. After the death of Muravyov, until the arrival of the new commander-in-chief of the front, I. I. Vatsetis, Tukhachevsky temporarily commanded the Eastern Front. The Soviet troops were temporarily demoralized by the betrayal of Muravyov, popular among the Red Army soldiers, who had proven himself to be a successful military leader back in Ukraine in the war against the Central Rada. They managed to receive Muravyov's telegrams about reconciliation with the Czechs and the war against Germany, and a few hours later - new telegrams about the murder of Muravyov and the continuation of the fight against the Czechoslovak corps and Komuch units. The Red Army soldiers were seized with panic, they almost without resistance left Bugulma, Melekes, Simbirsk, and in early August Kazan, where the bulk of the Russian gold reserves evacuated here fell into the hands of the Czechs and the People's Army. The commissars, as well as many Bolshevik-minded ordinary soldiers, began to suspect almost all of them of betrayal.

former officers. Tukhachevsky did not escape suspicion, although, it would seem, his behavior during, as Mikhail Nikolayevich himself said, "Muravyov's buffoon uprising," did not give any reason to doubt his loyalty to the Soviet regime. A member of the Revolutionary Military Council of the front, P. A. Kobozev, even ordered the arrest of Tukhachevsky, but this was opposed by Vareikis and a member of the Revolutionary Military Council of the 1st Army, V. V. Kuibyshev. The conflict was settled without the intervention of Moscow.

On July 29, 1918, the Eastern Front was declared the main front of the Republic. A few days later Trotsky, chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council and People's Commissar for Military and Naval Affairs, left here. Before that, a meeting of the Revolutionary Military Council was held with the participation of Lenin. Trotsky recalled this meeting as follows:

"It is necessary to mobilize everyone and everything and move to the front," said Lenin. It is necessary to remove all combat-ready units from the "veil" and transfer them to the Volga ...

- And the Germans? - answered Lenin.

"The Germans will not move, they are not up to it, and they themselves are interested in us coping with the Czechoslovaks."

As a result, Trotsky went east with solid reinforcements from the troops of the former Western Veil, with communists mobilized for political work. Lev Davidovich had a remarkable conversation with Vladimir Ilyich, reproduced by Trotsky from memory in 1924: "The hastily put together regiments and detachments, mainly from the decomposed soldiers of the old army ... crumbled very deplorably at the first clash with the Czechoslovaks.

"In order to overcome this disastrous instability, we need strong barrage detachments of communists and militants in general," I told Lenin before leaving for the east. - Must be forced to fight. If you wait until the man is out of his mind, perhaps it will be too late.

"Of course, that's right," he answered, "only I'm afraid that the barrage detachments will not show the due firmness. The Russian man has got it, he is not enough for decisive measures of revolutionary terror. But you have to try."

And the attempt, as you know, was a success. First on the Eastern Front, and then throughout Russia. Trotsky just had to use an iron hand with the help of tribunals and detachments to establish discipline in the troops fighting in the Volga region. The chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council rightly believed:

"You can't build an army without repression. You can't lead masses of people to death without having the death penalty in the arsenal of the command. As long as the evil tailless monkeys, proud of their technology, called people, build armies and fight, the command will put soldiers between possible death ahead and inevitable death behind."

He arrived at the front headquarters in Sviyazhsk near Kazan shortly after the fall of the latter. And immediately issued a formidable order:

"I warn you, if any unit retreats arbitrarily, the commissar will be shot first, the commander second. Courageous, brave soldiers will be placed in command posts. Cowards, self-seekers, traitors will not escape the bullet. I vouch for this in the face of the Red Army."

But the threat is worth little on paper. The Red Army continued

retreat without serious pressure from the enemy. And Trotsky quickly proved that he did not rush with words. In his memoirs, he described how he fulfilled the promise of bullets for cowards and deserters:

"The fresh regiment, on which we so counted, withdrew from the front, led by a commissar and commander, seized a steamer with bayonets at the ready and plunged on it in order to sail to the Lower. A wave of alarm passed along the front. Everyone began to look around at the river. The situation seemed almost hopeless. The headquarters remained in place, although the enemy was at a distance of a kilometer or two and shells were exploding in the neighborhood. I talked with the invariable Markin (famous sailor, Trotsky's assistant in the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, publisher of secret agreements between Russia and the allies, and in those days - the commissioner of the Volga Flotilla. The deserters surrendered without resistance, the steamer moored at the wharf, the deserters disembarked, I appointed a field tribunal, which sentenced the commander, the commissar, and a certain number of soldiers to death. A red-hot iron was applied to the rotted wound. I explained the situation to the regiment without hiding or softening anything. A number of communists were interspersed with the soldiers. Under the new command and with a new state of health, the regiment returned to its positions. Everything happened so quickly that the enemy did not have time to take advantage of the shock.

In total, 21 people were shot that time. The "well-being" of the troops really changed: "good Russian men", dressed in gray soldier's overcoats, quickly "smelled out" that no one would joke with them, that the time for rallies had passed, and detachments of communists and proven militants (some with pre-revolutionary experience) without hesitation they apply "decisive measures of revolutionary terror." Even the former member of the Revolutionary Military Council of the Eastern Front, S. I. Gusev, did not

who had sympathy for Trotsky, nevertheless, already in 1924, when the star of the chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council was fading, he recognized Trotsky's outstanding contribution to achieving a turning point on the Eastern Front:

Comrade's arrival Trotsky introduced a decisive change in the state of affairs. On the train Comrade. Trotsky's strong will to win, initiative and resolute pressure on all aspects of army work arrived at the provincial station Sviyazhsk ... Tough measures comrade. Trotsky for this era, partisanship and indiscipline ... were first of all and most expedient and necessary. Nothing could be done by agreement, and there was no time for this. And during those 25 days that comrade. Trotsky spent in Sviyazhsk (before leaving for Moscow on September 1 in connection with the assassination attempt on Lenin. - B.S.), a lot of work was done that turned the frustrated and decomposed units of the 5th Army into combat-ready and prepared them for the capture of Kazan.

The young commander managed to achieve in his army the same thing that Trotsky achieved in the 5th. Like the chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council, he was a supporter of the widespread involvement of officers of the tsarist army in command positions in the Red Army and did not stop at using repression to discipline the Red Army masses. The first tribunals created by Tukhachevsky in the Red Army did not sit idle. And before military happiness returned to

Soviet troops near Kazan and Simbirsk, on the front of the 1st Army, critical situations were created more than once. As Army Commissar O. Yu. Kalnin wrote:

"Comrade Tukhachevsky and I then set a motto for ourselves: if you die, then die only as true fighters after the last round fired - even if the entire center is captured and cut off from us."

However, such a touching unity under enemy fire did not prevent the commissar and the commander from starting a rather banal quarrel a few months later, the result of which was the transfer of Tukhachevsky to another front. But we are getting ahead of ourselves a little.

Tukhachevsky very early realized the need to mobilize into the Red Army not only the military personnel of the tsarist army who ended up on Soviet territory (on July 29 he carried out such a mobilization in the part of the Simbirsk province defended by the 1st army), but also captured white soldiers. He stopped the robberies and extrajudicial executions of prisoners, which were once encouraged by Muravyov. And he issued an order where he ordered

"under the personal responsibility of the commanders and political commissars with them: do not repair any violence and repressions against defectors and prisoners from the peasants and workers mobilized by the White Guards, but deliver them to the division headquarters. Political commissars will be able to deal with obvious enemies of the revolution and save the lives of those workers and peasants who, having been mobilized by the Czechoslovaks, did not want to go against their Red Army brothers.

The energy and diligence of Tukhachevsky, his willingness to take harsh measures to establish a revolutionary order in his units received praise from Trotsky himself. He cites "the glorious name of Comrade Tukhachevsky" as an example to other army commanders.

Kazan was returned by the Red Army on 10 September. The 1st army of Tukhachevsky at that time was advancing on Simbirsk, cutting off the retreat of the Kazan White group to the south.

The Simbirsk operation was the first major operation developed and successfully carried out by Tukhachevsky. In the essay "The First Army in 1918" he described in detail its course. First, white groups were to be defeated to the south (near Kuzovatovo station) and north of Simbirsk, near the village of Bolshoe Batyrev, and then it was planned to capture the city and the railway bridge across the Volga with a quick attack in order to immediately cross to the left bank. The Inza division and the Vitebsk regiment of the Simbirsk division advanced on Kuzovatovo, and the Alatyr group of the Simbirsk division advanced on Bolshoe Batyrev. Now let's give the floor to Tukhachevsky, who described his first major success with enthusiasm characteristic of youth and three years later still captured by the excitement of the battle:

"On August 25, the rapid fulfillment of the assigned task begins. The enemy is shot down and stunned. On August 27, the Inza division enters the line east of the villages of Russian Temryazan - Polivanov - Akshout. The Vitebsk regiment, attacking the enemy from the rear, came out on the same date southwest of the village of Baevka. The defeated enemy, swiftly slipping out of the bag, fled to the southeast of the Kuzovatovo station ...

On August 28, the Inza division occupied the Kuzovatovo station, and thus

Thus, on the right, the attack on Simbirsk was secured.

To ensure the operation on the left, the Alatyr group was tasked with defeating the enemy Batyrev group with a blow from the Ibresi station.

The Alatyr group set up a barrier on the outskirts of the city of Alatyr, and struck with the main forces from the Ibresi station, in the direction of B. Batyrev. The accumulation of the enemy was dispersed, and his remnants fled to Buinsk ... The commander-in-chief promised significant reinforcements by about 25 August. However, at the beginning of September I received a notice from him that reinforcements would be somewhat late.

In connection with this, and also with the fact that the situation on the front of the army was favorable, the idea of waiting for reinforcements had to be abandoned. It was necessary to start the operation in cash.

In order to strengthen the Simbirsk direction and ensure our superiority of forces here, we had to weaken the sectors of the Penza and Inza divisions, leaving only weak barriers here.

Initially, I planned to strike at Simbirsk with two divisions: Inzenskaya and Simbirskaya, but difficulties in organizing communications and rear forces forced all the forces intended to attack Simbirsk to be transferred to the commander of Simbirskaya Guy.

The plan of operation was based on the idea of a concentric offensive. The Penza division was given the task of actively defending the occupied lines. The Inza division at the front was also assigned a defensive task. But the cavalry of the left flank

the task was to occupy the village of Terenga and interrupt the telegraph communication Syzran - Simbirsk ...

The forces of the shock Simbirsk group comrade. Guy reached about 8 thousand bayonets. The enemy occupied the forward lines with small forces and had rather significant forces in the Simbirsk area (which was clarified after the capture of the latter). With these reserves, as it turned out later, the Whites were only slightly inferior in numbers, but when drawing up the plan, our forces seemed to be significantly superior to those of the enemy.

The starting position for the Simbirsk group was outlined along the line Popovka - Annenkov - Prislionikha. In addition, the 5th Kursk Regiment was transferred by trucks from the Chufarovo station to the area of the Algaim station for an offensive bypassing the right flank of the enemy, along the highway Algaim station - Nogatkino - Simbirsk. Thus, the baseline reached almost 100 miles along the front.

We could meet the first serious enemy forces on the Elshanka Vyry - Petrovka line and separate detachments - in the area of the village of Shumovka. The main forces of the group moved along the highways Popovka - Elshanka and Prislionikha - Tetyushskoye and between them. Thus, by the time of serious fighting, the front of the attacking units was reduced to 60 miles by the evening of the very first day of the offensive.

By order number 7 for the army, the start of the offensive was scheduled for the morning of September 9, and the capture of Simbirsk was calculated on the third day of the offensive ... These calculations were based on: firstly, the superiority of our forces, concentric movement and, thirdly, the speed of movement and suddenness. On the line of the enemy's location, our units have already achieved full interaction, widely bypassed the location

the enemy and thereby predetermined his quick defeat.

All these calculations were fully justified in practice. By the evening of the first day, the White Guard troops were in a panic. In the center they offered fierce resistance, but the endless detour of their flanks completely upset the latter, and the retreat took on a disorderly character. On the outskirts of Simbirsk, they tried to settle down and offer the last resistance, but with the unanimous onslaught of our inspired troops, they were quickly shot down and overturned over the Sviata, and then over the Volga.

Thus, a thoroughly prepared operation with one blow solved an extremely important task. The strong Simbirsk group of the enemy was defeated, and the Volga was cut, and, therefore, the best retreat for the White Guards from near Kazan, which fell almost simultaneously with Simbirsk ... We captured colossal war trophies. The railway bridge across the Volga was captured in perfect working order.

During the operation to capture Simbirsk, Tukhachevsky showed features of his own military style. Here is Suvorov's "speed and onslaught" (later, in Moscow, Mikhail Nikolayevich, having collected a very rich library, devoted a special section to rare books about the life and wars of Suvorov). Here and the desire to achieve success with minimal losses for their troops. Here and in the habit

at the decisive point of the front to bring into action almost all the available forces, leaving practically no reserves and relegating concern for the flanks to the background. This tactic was based on a firm belief in the superiority of one's own troops over the enemy's troops, both in moral terms and in terms of combat training. When things actually went like this, Tukhachevsky was lucky. However, one day the enemy turned out to be not a bastard, and then, as we will soon see, a complete rout followed. I also note that Tukhachevsky boldly used new means of struggle. So, he was almost the first to repeat the experience of the French General J. Gallieni, who during the Battle of Marne in 1914 organized the transfer of an entire division in Paris taxis mobilized for this (Tukhachevsky used trucks more suitable for military transportation).

Successes on the Eastern Front were made easier for the Reds by the fact that almost all Czechoslovak troops had already been withdrawn from the battle. The command of the corps professed almost a Leninist principle: any Russian counter-revolution is worth something only if it knows how to defend itself. The Slavic brothers were not going to drag chestnuts out of the fire for the deputies of the All-Russian Constituent Assembly that had gathered in Samara, dispersed by the Bolsheviks. The people's army of Komuch was still weak, even began to form later than the Red Army, and was just learning to really fight. However, the Whites already had detachments capable of fighting skillfully and steadfastly. One of these detachments is the Special Purpose Rifle Brigade of Lieutenant Colonel of the General Staff V. O. Kappel. Later, with Kolchak, he will become a lieutenant general and lead the remnants of the white armies in Siberia on the last tragic "ice campaign" for Baikal, dying from pneumonia in the harsh winter of 1920 at the very goal .. It is the Kappel units that we remember from the film "Chapaev" of their the famous "psychic attack" - "The Kappelites are coming!". Although later, in the 19th,

Kappel had to deal mainly with new, newly formed units, whose fighters now and then strove to defect to the Reds. But the reputation of a successful military leader, capable of leading soldiers and officers, Vladimir Oskarovich retained to the very end. Now, in September 1918, Kappel had only three thousand fighters, and the brigade had not yet completed its formation. But a significant part of the brigade are volunteers, ready to fight the Bolsheviks. And Kappel leads his officers and soldiers on a counterattack to recapture Simbirsk, pushes back Tukhachevsky's troops from the left bank of the Volga and starts a battle on the Simbirsk outskirts. But the 1st Army was able to hold the city. The strongest of the armies of the Eastern Front, the 5th, led by a former lieutenant from the Latvian riflemen, P. A. Slaven, helped her in this. She sent reinforcements to Simbirsk and distracted Kappel's detachment. The army of Tukhachevsky got the opportunity to develop an offensive against Samara, the capital of Komuch.

In 1921, the commander spoke in detail about the battles for holding Simbirsk:

"Simbirsk was taken on the morning of September 12. By evening, the enemy came to his senses, launched an attack on the railway bridge and pressed our forward units. On September 13, the Whites began to bombard the city.

The bourgeoisie began to sow panic. Young troops could easily decompose. There were cases of robberies.

It was necessary to decisively and quickly cross to the left bank of the Volga and overturn the enemy. But this bank was already firmly occupied by the Whites, and only one bridge remained in our hands, a very long, there were no auxiliary means of crossing.

In such conditions, it was necessary to act boldly. It was decided to cross the Volga in front of the enemy's eyes on the bridge, which was under continuous machine-gun and artillery fire from the Whites. Such an attack was to finally break the spirit of the enemy and inspire our troops.

The attack began at one in the morning. The plan of attack was as follows. First of all, a steam locomotive was let through without a driver, at full steam, with an open regulator, to test the path and destroy the enemy's armored train, if one were encountered. This locomotive was followed by an armored train Comrade. Tulinsky. Behind the armored train moved the second brigade of the Simbirsk division under the command of comrade. Nedzvedsky. In the head was the 2nd Simbirsk regiment. Artillery preparation was led by the inspector of artillery of the army comrade. Garder. The crossing was led by Comrade. Engelhardt. Artillery fired in the afternoon and from the beginning of the offensive of our troops gradually transferred fire to the rear of the enemy.

The furiously rushing engine and the deadly artillery fire immediately made a strong moral impression on the whites. An armored train stepped behind the locomotive, and a shootout ensued.

The infantry's movement along the milestone bridge was very heavy. Even in the afternoon, the enemy managed to set fire to several barges with oil on the shore, and now a bright glow illuminated the bridge.

The Whites, amazed by the unexpected attack, demoralized by artillery fire and the attack of the armored train, opened indiscriminate rifle, machine-gun and artillery fire on the railway bridge.

However, the rapid pressure of our troops did its job. The enemy units closest to the bridge fled, and the main danger - machine-gun and rifle fire - was eliminated. Artillery fire, poorly targeted, did little harm.

As a result, this daring attack by our young red units was crowned with complete success. The enemy was defeated in the night and left in our hands a completely serviceable railway crossing, and left a lot of artillery, machine guns and so on at the battlefield. Our pursuing units quickly advanced to the Cherdakly station line.

After such a decisive success, the enemy, fearing a threat to the retreat of the White troops from Kazan to Nurlat, concentrated new reinforcements in the Simbirsk direction and again went on the offensive. Our units were shot down and again thrown back to the right bank of the Volga. This time the Whites succeeded in blowing up the last truss of the bridge.

At this time, the right-bank group of the 5th Army, after the capture of Kazan, was transported along the Volga to Simbirsk in order to change units of the 1st Army here. Unfortunately, these forces came too late.

It was necessary to push the enemy back as soon as possible

to make a change, since the participation of the Simbirsk division was absolutely necessary in the Syzran direction.

The following plan was adopted. The arriving units of the right-bank group crossed near the village of Krestovye Gorodishchi and attacked the whites in the flank and rear in the direction of Petrovskoye-Suchya. The 5th Kursk Regiment crosses over at the Staraya Maina station and goes on a deep detour to the Bryandino station with a barrier at the Cherdakly station. Parts of the 2nd brigade of the Simbirsk division, having crossed the Volga, are attacking the enemy along the front ...

The operation ended with a brilliant success. The enemy, taken by surprise by the attack, was utterly defeated in the area of Petrovskoe-Suchya and fled to Bryandino. Here the remnants of it were overtaken by the 5th Kursk Regiment and finally destroyed. Our forward units have occupied Melekess."

Undoubtedly, Guy's Iron Division at that moment was still far from justifying the future high-profile name. Tukhachevsky understood that only success could give the necessary stamina, prevent panic and decay. At the same time, the young army commander was deeply convinced that all his operations were brilliant, and neighboring armies were always obliged to come to his aid in time. Tukhachevsky seemed to forget that in a civil war, orders were especially often not carried out on time (and in any war, everything rarely goes according to plan), and communication worked very badly. And, of course, recalling his first glorious military deed, like the vast majority of commanders, he did not avoid poetic exaggerations. Neither the Kappel brigade nor other parts of the People's Army, of course, were destroyed. But they suffered heavy losses and gave the initiative to the Reds for a long time.

Immediately after the capture of Simbirsk, the commander of the 1st Army repulsed a telegram to Lenin:

"Dear Vladimir Ilyich! The capture of your native city is the answer to your one wound, and for the second - there will be Samara!"

The telegram was, as they say, "for history". Apparently, Ilyich remembered the conversation with the "communist second lieutenant", fell in love with the young guardsman. And he answered with a telegram no less "historical", like the telegram of Tukhachevsky, intended for multiple citation in the official textbooks of the history of the country and the party:

"The capture of Simbirsk - my hometown - is the most healing, the best bandage for my wounds. I feel an unprecedented surge of vigor and strength."

It so happened that the main groupings of the White People's Army acted in the Kazan direction, against the 5th Army, and in the Perm region, against the 3rd. The latter did not fit into any canons of strategy at all. The Bolsheviks did not have vital centers there. But it was the shortest way to connect with the British, who were sitting in Arkhangelsk. And through the ports of Arkhangelsk and Murmansk, it was possible to evacuate the Czechoslovak corps to their homeland, whose soldiers and officers were not very attracted by the long journey to Vladivostok and from there - an almost round-the-world trip by sea. That is why only in the offensive against Kotlas and Vyatka, in the direction of the coveted northern ports, it was still possible to use Czechoslovak units in the future. The "Czechoslovak factor" forced the Samara Committee of the Constituent Assembly and its successor the Ufa Directory, created at the end of September,

concentrate their forces in the north, while the Red Army delivered the main blow in the center. Tukhachevsky's troops were destined to liberate from the Whites not only Lenin's hometown of Simbirsk, which was soon destined to become Ulyanovsk, but also the capital of Komuch, Samara, taken on October 8 by a concentric strike. Soon the troops of the Directory also left Ufa. The anti-Soviet forces in the east were in a state of deepest crisis. But Tukhachevsky at that time did not happen to become the liberator of the Urals and Siberia. He was transferred to the Southern Front against the Cossack army of Ataman P. N. Krasnov. It had already been defeated near Tsaritsyn, and the command of the Red Army hoped first of all to finish off the Don Army, and then to defeat the Volunteer Army of General Denikin. On December 15, 1918, Lenin demands from the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic:

"... Nothing to the west, a little to the east, everything (almost) to the south."

But after the seemingly close and real defeat of the Don and volunteers, the possibility of a rapid advance into the areas left by the Germans who capitulated in Compiègne, and the hope of bringing a world revolution to Western Europe on the Red Army bayonets, opened up. The last days of Tukhachevsky's stay in the 1st Army were overshadowed by a conflict with its commissars. Mikhail Nikolayevich, like the vast majority of commanders, did not really like the commissars. He believed that, at least, such as he, communist commanders, members of the Revolutionary Military Council should not hamper either in specific operational and strategic decisions, or in orders on personnel issues and the daily life of combat and rear units. The commissioners, of course, thought differently. In addition, Tukhachevsky often invited his relatives to feed him in times of famine at the expense of army reserves. His mother and sisters stayed with him for several months. And his wife constantly accompanied the commander. All this annoyed the members of the Revolutionary Military Council. Tukhachevsky did not like the fact that the commissars were interfering with his orders, seeking the cancellation of orders given. At the end of December 1918, already having an order to take up the post of assistant commander of the Southern Front, the commander of the 1st achieved the recall of Commissar S.P. Medvedev from the army, which led to a series of reports and denunciations from political workers who took the side of Medvedev. In particular, the commissar of the 20th Penza Division F.I.

In January 19, Samsonovich wrote not only to the Revolutionary Military Council of the Eastern Front, but also to the chairman of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, Ya. M. Sverdlov:

"I consider it my revolutionary duty to give an objective assessment of the work of Comrade Medvedev as his predecessor in the Penza Division. In early August last year, about 40 of us communists arrived on the Eastern Front from Petrograd. , not a division commissar, but a soldier who had been in the trenches for several months without a break, covered in dust, in a worn-out soldier's overcoat, tanned, his face haggard, concentrated ... Comrade Medvedev was almost all the time at the forefront, among the Red Army ... Involuntarily, a comparison of the first meeting with Medvedev and Tukhachevsky, who arrived in a saloon car with his wife and numerous servants, comes to mind, and even near the car in which Tukhachevsky was, it was difficult to pass, so that someone from Tukhachevsky's servant would not ask: "You Who? Come on in, don't stop!"... I can only say one thing: if we had more workers like Medvedev, then our army would be many times stronger and stronger than at present."

At the same time, the commissar of the 1st Army, O. Yu. Kalnin, telegraphed to the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic:

"On December 31, without our knowledge, Commander-1 Tukhachevsky sent a telegram to the Revolutionary Military Councils of the Front and the Republic, in which he calls Political Commissar Medvedev an obvious provocateur, whose actions, according to Tukhachevsky, systematically destroy the army, and cites the following facts as proof. First: Medvedev undermines the authority of the commander, namely, it cancels a business trip authorized by the army commander to the assistant head of the army intelligence department, who, as the main thing, is instructed to purchase and bring butter, pigs, flour for the headquarters officials for the holiday (obviously, the New Year. - B. S.). Second: Medvedev, being the commissar of the Penza division, from August to September 1918, upset the division, which resulted in the retreat of the Penza division at Belebey. The accusation of a clear provocation on the part of Tukhachevsky, a young officer who, according to his personal words, had known the party only since August 1917 years (this is Kalnin's obvious fantasy - after all, back in 1912, Tukhachevsky met and became friends with the Bolshevik Kulyabko. - B.S.), is an extremely demagogic action ... The reason for the aggravation of relations between the political commissars and the commander is the following. With the development of the army, the army headquarters also developed, as well as the entire administration, but only in quantity and staff, but not in quality. Hidden sabotage, neglect, nepotism were noticed. As far as possible, measures were taken to suppress such phenomena, there were a number of shifts and movements with which the commander did not fully agree. From the top officials and the army commander, a cadre was formed, which fenced itself with a Chinese wall from the influence and control of the political commissars. The desire to avoid joint work was especially noticeable with the capture of Syzran, as well as with every praise from the high command (addressed to the commander), and especially when Tukhachevsky was appointed assistant commander of the Southern Front in the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic. Our army commander crowned with the laurels of victories of the army-1 raised his head like a real red general like Napoleon. On December 22, Commander-in-Chief Vatsetis declares that he, as a commander and, moreover, a communist, cannot put up,

that political commissars were assigned to him on an equal footing with the old general ... I cannot put up with such behavior of the commander, considering it as a step aimed at discrediting the power of the commissars and an attempt to arbitrarily establish the order of the sole control of the army ... I ask you to stop the harassment of the commander and protect dignity commissioners".

Trotsky and other leaders of the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic took the side of Tukhachevsky in this conflict and removed Medvedev from the 1st Army - as a warning to others. The commissars attached to the army commanders are, of course, a necessary institution, but Sergey Pavlovich went too far. Eka unseen salon-car at the commander with errands (adjutants) and servants. Over there, the chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council has not a wagon, but a whole armored train with a large team. Otherwise, it is simply impossible to manage troops when communications are unreliable, and commanders are inexperienced, and sometimes unreliable, and the head of the military department and the commander have to personally push the supply of troops with everything necessary to the most needy divisions and regiments. By the way, here is how Koritsky, who made so much noise, describes the salon-car of Tukhachevsky, unlike Samsonovich, who is quite friendly to Mikhail Nikolayevich:

"His saloon car, which previously belonged to some major railway official, was comfortable and convenient for work. There was a desk, heavy mahogany armchairs, a round table near the leather sofa. Behind it we ... drank tea ... On On Tukhachevsky's desk, I noticed a volume of Pushkin opened on the "History of the Pugachevsky Rebellion. Nearby were Gustav Adolf's Campaigns," Bezrukov's "Applied Tactics," Mikhnevich's "Strategy"... "Yes," he sighed, "since the time of Razin and Pugachev, this region did not know wars. And now please..."

As you can see, Tukhachevsky did not abuse any special excesses. Of the "luxury items" he had only books on military art. Yes, and they studied only at night. Koritsky cites the words of the conductor of the saloon car about Tukhachevsky:

"All night I only took a nap for three hours, otherwise I read everything ..."

It is interesting that, although there were regiments named after Stepan Razin and Emelyan Pugachev in the Red Army, in a conversation with Koritsky with the peasant uprisings of the 18th-18th centuries, Tukhachevsky correlated not his party comrades who were in power, but the rebellion of the Czechoslovak corps and the People's Army. The Bolsheviks for him at that moment were already a new incarnation of Russian statehood.

As for the pig for the festive table, Trotsky and his colleagues probably laughed heartily at this. The chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council did not indulge in such delicacies. And as for sabotage, nepotism and slovenliness, it is unlikely that here the headquarters of the 1st Army stood out for the worse. All these vices flourished in other headquarters as well, and in and of themselves could not cause dissatisfaction with the army commander on the part of the Revolutionary Military Council. After all, Tukhachevsky took cities one after another and so far had no major military failures on his account.

It is possible that Commissar Medvedev really was an ascetic who did not care at all about personal comforts and his own appearance, in contrast to Tukhachevsky, who was smart and appreciated comfort. Later, Sergei Pavlovich was one of the leaders of the "workers' opposition",

just accusing the leaders of the party that they enjoy all the blessings of life at the expense of ordinary party members. Medvedev and Tukhachevsky ended the same way: at different times they disappeared in the wave of Stalin's purges.

Mikhail Nikolaevich arrived at the Southern Front in early January 1919. He did not remain an assistant to the front commander for long, preferring to lead one of the armies - the 8th, where the 15th Inzen division, formerly one of the best in the 1st army, was now fighting. By that time, Krasnov's troops, decomposed under the influence of Tsaritsyn's failure and Soviet agitation, were retreating disorderly, many Cossack regiments, believing the promises that the Soviets would not touch them, dispersed to their homes. However, the troops of the Red Army and the Cheka detachments occupying the territory of the Don region began to carry out the inhuman directive on "decossackization", sanctioned by Lenin and Sverdlov on January 24, 1919. It provided not only legal, but almost total physical liquidation of the Cossack class. Member of the Revolutionary Military Council of the 8th Army I. E. Yakir, who became one of Tukhachevsky's closest friends and shared his bitter fate, in development

Directives of the Central Committee issued an order providing for "execution on the spot of all those with weapons" (and among the Cossacks, almost everyone was armed) and "percentage destruction of the male population." The new commander of the 8th Army took some steps to limit the scale of repressions and requisitions (bread was taken cleanly from the Cossacks), rightly fearing a mass uprising of people who had learned to fight since childhood. So, Tukhachevsky softened the order of the Revolutionary Military Council of the Southern Front of February 15, 1919 on the confiscation of horses and carts from the Cossacks, demanding that the entire burden of this disastrous measure for the Cossack households be laid "exclusively on the kulak and wealthy part of the population." But his power as commander of the army for a significant change in policy in the Don region was clearly not enough.

Tukhachevsky's army advanced along the Don. Parts of Krasnov offered only weak resistance. Cossacks surrendered by the thousands. However, from the end of January 1919, the troops of the Volunteer Army entered the Donets Basin, and the advance of the Southern Front slowed down. Since mid-February, after the resignation of Krasnov and the arrival of Denikin's henchman General A.P. Bogaevsky to the post of ataman, the influx of units of the Volunteer Army to the Don has increased dramatically. The commander of the Southern Front, V. M. Gittis, sent the 8th Army to the southeast, deep into the Don region. Tukhachevsky, on the other hand, arbitrarily turned his troops to Millerovo in order to advance on Rostov along the shortest path - through the Donbass and defeat the volunteer divisions. He took into account that the proletarian population of the coal basin is much more sympathetic to the Red Army than the Cossacks, embittered by decossacks. Tukhachevsky, it would seem, is going to a direct violation of military discipline. However, this case is not as simple as it might seem. The fact is that the front commander Gittis himself, by his orders, violated the directive of the commander-in-chief Vatsetis, which provided for the maneuver of part of the front forces from Tsaritsyn in the direction of the Donbass. Gittis proceeded from the grouping of Soviet troops that had developed after the defeat of the Cossacks near Tsaritsyn and the difficulty of transferring new forces to the Millerovo-Rostov direction, since the enemy, during the retreat, thoroughly destroyed

railways.

The 8th Army, interacting with the group of I.S. Kozhevnikov moving towards Rostov, achieved certain successes. But the forces for a decisive victory were not enough. The front commander, at the urgent request of the commander-in-chief, who agreed with the proposals of the commander-8, tried to do what he did not do in January: regroup the troops in march order to strike at the Donbass, but the depletion of the horse staff and the typhus epidemic significantly slowed down the maneuver. Time was irrevocably lost. In March, Tukhachevsky's army was able to push back volunteer units to the right bank of the Seversky Donets in the Kalitvenskaya - Glubokaya - Krasnovka - Luganskaya area. But in the meantime, the ice began to drift, the river opened up, and a further offensive through the widely overflowing Donets became impossible for a long time. In addition, in early March, a Cossack uprising broke out on the Upper Don, diverting the ever-increasing forces of the Reds. Tukhachevsky, like Vatsetis, considered Gittis the main culprit for the failure to finish off the Don Army and completely occupy the Don Army Region and the Donbass. On March 23, 1919 (it was this day that the Commander-in-Chief previously called as the deadline for defeating the enemy), Mikhail Nikolayevich, at his request, motivated by the impossibility of working with Gittis, received a new appointment. Tukhachevsky was returned to Vostochny

front, where a critical situation has developed again.

On November 18, 1918, the government of the Directory, which settled in Omsk, was overthrown by detachments of officers and Cossacks, who brought to power the former commander of the Black Sea Fleet, Admiral A. V. Kolchak. The admiral proclaimed himself the "Supreme Ruler of Russia" and in fact established a military dictatorship in Siberia and the Urals. Kolchak managed for some time to unite the disparate troops of several regional governments in eastern Russia, to form a more or less combat-ready army, supplied with everything necessary by England and France from the stocks remaining after the First World War. The admiral threw her on the offensive on the Soviet Eastern Front, hoping to reach the Volga, and then undertake a decisive campaign against Moscow. On March 4, the Siberian Army under the command of the Czech General R. Gaida, who decided to try his luck with the Russian White movement, went on the offensive to the Kama River, driving back parts of the 2nd and 3rd Red armies. And on March 6, the Western Army of General M.V. Khanzhin went on the attack, overturning the 5th Soviet Army, which was twice inferior in number to it. The Whites occupied Ufa, Bugulma, Buguruslan, Belebey ... They had from 80 to 100 kilometers to the Volga. The 5th Army was defeated and rolled back without serious resistance by 20-25 kilometers per day. The center of the Eastern Front was broken through. The Soviet command urgently needed to strengthen the 5th Army in order to achieve a turning point. Divisions were sent here both from neighboring armies and from other fronts, as well as new formations from the interior provinces. The 5th Army was to become the strongest on the Eastern Front. At the beginning of April, Tukhachevsky was placed at its head.

The commander of the Eastern Front, S. S. Kamenev, developed a plan for a counterattack on the flank of the army of Khanzhin by the troops of the Southern Group of M. V. Frunze, which consisted of three armies: the 1st, 4th and Turkestan. Another army, the 5th, until May 11 was temporarily subordinate to Frunze. Then a personal acquaintance of Tukhachevsky with Frunze began, quickly

developed into friendship.

On April 28, the Southern Group launched a counteroffensive into the flank and rear of the Western Army. The 5th Army attacked the enemy frontally in the general direction of Buguruslan and Bugulma. During the subsequent offensive, the left-flank 6th Ural Corps of the Whites was defeated, and Khanzhin was forced to suspend the rapid march to the Volga. Having repulsed the counterattack of the enemy, who brought into action the newly formed and poorly trained Volga Corps of Kappel, the 27th Infantry Division of the 5th Army occupied Bugulma on May 13. Khanzhin's troops, although they escaped encirclement, suffered heavy losses and lost morale. However, Kolchak's mastermind D. A. Lebedev and the commander of the Siberian army did not realize the gravity of the situation. The Siberians continued their offensive against Vyatka, which had already become meaningless, in the vain hope that the Reds would transfer part of the forces that were smashing the Western army against the troops of Gaida.

Meanwhile, there were changes in the command of the Soviet Eastern Front. On May 5, S. S. Kamenev was replaced by the former General A. A. Samoilov, who had previously headed the 6th Separate Army in the Arkhangelsk direction. This appointment was the result of the beginning of the confrontation between Trotsky and a member of the Revolutionary Military Council of the Eastern Front, S. I. Gusev, who supported Kamenev. This conflict escalated from the second half of May, when the defeat of

Western White Army. Kamenev and Gusev insisted on continuing the general offensive with the aim of finishing off Kolchak without giving him a respite, otherwise the Kolchakists would recover over the winter and by the spring of 1920 would again be a formidable enemy. But commander-in-chief Vatsetis and Trotsky believed that the main forces should be transferred to the south against Denikin, who was acting more and more successfully, and in the east to be limited to active defense at the turn of the Belaya River after the proposed capture of Ufa. These disputes, which took place not only within the framework of the military department, but also in the Central Committee of the party, ended only in July, when Kamenev took the place of Vatsetis, who was arrested on an unverified charge of Bonapartist inclinations. Trotsky later admitted he was right

their opponents:

"I already considered the Southern Front immeasurably more serious and dangerous than the Eastern Front. This was later fully confirmed. But in the assessment of Kolchak's army, the correctness turned out to be on the side of the command of the Eastern Front ... The Central Committee ruled against the high command and thus against me, so how I supported Vatsetis, proceeding from the fact that there are several unknowns in this strategic equation, but that the need to support the still too fresh authority of the commander-in-chief is a solid value. The decision of the Central Committee turned out to be correct. The Eastern Front allocated some forces for the south and at the same time time victoriously advanced into the depths of Siberia on the heels of Kolchak.

During Samoilov's short command of the Eastern Front, the first dramatic events of this confrontation took place, in which Commander-5 had to play an important role.

In 1935, in an article in Krasnaya Zvezda, Tukhachevsky outlined the course of events as follows:

"Starting on April 25 (Tukhachevsky's troops attacked the Whites three days earlier than the main forces of the Southern Group in order to attract reserves

Western army and facilitate its flank bypass. - B.S.), the offensive of the Southern Group developed very successfully. By May 1, the right flank of the 5th Army reached the area of the Zaglyadino station ... At this time, Trotsky found it necessary to intervene in the affairs of the Eastern Front. Commander comrade. S. S. Kamenev was relieved of his post, and Comrade was appointed in his place. A. A. Samoilov. This circumstance completely spoiled the brilliant beginning of our counter-offensive and allowed the Whites to order their retreat. The 5th Army was withdrawn from the subordination of Comrade. Frunze and passed into the direct subordination of Comrade. Samoilov. May 11 Comrade. Samoilov aims the 5th Army north, to the mouth of the Vyatka River, on May 14 turns it to Belebey, on May 17 again sends it to the north, and on May 19 to the northeast. Instead of chasing, marking time."

Protests began against such a command. On May 21, Commander-5 sent a telegram to the commander, which stated:

"Starting from May 10, probably due to many circumstances unknown to me, you were given five tasks for the 5th Army, each time canceling one another ... These cancellations of orders completely exhausted the divisions, and the units were completely mixed up, communications were broken, and so on. ."

In conclusion, the commander asked the commander to comply with article 19 of the Field Manual, edition of 1918, which states that before

give an order, you have to think.

Comrade also endured great troubles. Frunze, to whom comrade. Samoilov unexpectedly on May 18 forbade the persecution of whites. Tov. Frunze gave a decisive rebuff, and comrade. Samoilov canceled his order, allowing Ufa to be occupied. Tov. Frunze successfully carried out an operation to occupy the city of Ufa.

Samoilov himself was lucky enough to outlive Tukhachevsky by more than a quarter of a century. And the situation in May 1919 he saw a little differently than the commander-5. In his memoirs, published in 1958, after the rehabilitation of Tukhachevsky, Alexander Alexandrovich admitted that he was not at all happy with the new appointment, considering it absurd at the time of intense fighting with an unclear outcome on the Eastern Front to replace the commander with a person who was not familiar with either the troops or the conditions theater. At first, he refused the appointment, having learned from his comrade-in-arms P.P. Lebedev, also a former general, and then the chief of staff of the Eastern Front, that the Revolutionary Military Council of the front threatened to abandon his posts if Kamenev was removed. However, Samoilov received a categorical order to take command and was forced to obey. And this is how he outlined the story with the leapfrog orders of the 5th army of Tukhachevsky:

"My work on the new front, as I feared, took shape under conditions that are harder to imagine.

The Revolutionary Military Council was actually headed by Gusev, an old Bolshevik well-versed in military affairs. The other two members of the Revolutionary Military Council of the front were only executors of Gusev's instructions. He himself later told me in Moscow, albeit in a joking tone, that he harbored dislike for me from that long time ago, when in Kiev I refused to take him, Kamenev, as my assistant to the headquarters of the Kiev military district.

After my arrival in Simbirsk, he not only remained there, but continued to live in the same apartment with Gusev and tried through him to influence all the decisions I made. It often happened that Gusev, agreeing with me on some issue in the morning, on the second

half a day, after returning from dinner and having apparently talked with Kamenev, he renounced his former opinion. And these hesitations naturally necessitated a change on my part, and sometimes even a change of mind. All my orders were discredited.

The situation was complicated by a sharp conflict between me and the commander of the 5th Army, Tukhachevsky, due to his incorrect reports on the actions of his divisions. Gusev also took his side. In response to my appeal to the Commander-in-Chief, I received permission to remove Commander-5 from command of the army. However, I, of course, did not consider it possible to carry out this permission due to the conditions of the operational situation, due to the same reasons for which I myself refused to be assigned to the Eastern Front.

Our common disagreements reached Lenin and compelled the center to reconsider the entire situation. As a result, Kamenev was reinstated as commander of the front, and I was returned to my post as commander of the 6th separate army ... "

Kamenev again took command of the Eastern Front on May 29, 1918. And on the same day, the Front's Revolutionary Military Council received a formidable

Lenin's telegram:

"If we do not conquer the Urals before winter, then I consider the death of the revolution inevitable. Strain all your strength."

The leader, as often happened to him, exaggerated the danger of the collapse of the revolution. But the conquest of the Urals really strengthened the position of the Bolsheviks to a large extent. In particular, weapons and equipment fell into their hands, orders for the production of which were placed by the Kolchak administration. Due to the rapid retreat and the swindle of the speculator-contractors, the whites never had time to get them.

Tukhachevsky, naturally, in his article, Samoilo preferred not to mention any actual dual power at the front during the short period of his command. And his conflict with the front commander was used by Gusev to return Kamenev. Samoilo testified:

"Later, I learned from Lebedev that as one of the arguments against me, Gusev presented my characterization (for several days of joint service!) As a protege of Trotsky (obviously giving the word "protege" some special meaning) and as a person incapable of command of the front, who brought confusion into the matter due to repeated changes in his decisions ... This characterization was not dictated by the desire for an objective assessment of my actions, but was an attempt to shift the blame from a sore head to a healthy one.

In the 19th conflict with the Tukhachevsky order spoiled the blood of Samoilo. But, quite possibly, it was this skirmish that saved Alexander Alexandrovich from repressions in the 30s. When Tukhachevsky, already the first deputy people's commissar of defense, published the article cited above with accusations against Samoilo, a direct hint that the commander of the Eastern Front was Trotsky's creature could mean civil, and often physical destruction of a person. Samoilo understood this and sent a private letter to Tukhachevsky asking him to indicate how to behave: "whether to resign or to appear in the press with explanations."

Through the Chief of Staff of the Moscow Military District of the former

the general, at that time - the military leader at the Moscow Hydrometeorological Institute, was reassured - he should "look at this issue only as an episode of history, so there is no need for explanations in the press, and continue to serve as he served until now."

'Either Tukhachevsky really didn't want Samoilo's evil, but only sought to assert his own rightness in a dispute sixteen years ago, or Stalin and the People's Commissar of Defense Voroshilov then, in the 35th, had already predetermined the fate of Tukhachevsky and were not going to pay attention to the literary denunciation emanating from him written, as always, in good style. True, the unflattering characterization of Samoilo given by Tukhachevsky later migrated to the preface to the collection of speeches and articles by Frunze, published in 1936, and in 1940, probably due to an oversight of the censor, it was repeated in one of the brochures dedicated to Frunze. Samoilo himself that year, after the fall of Tukhachevsky, unexpectedly experienced the last surge of his military career. He was awarded the rank of lieutenant general of aviation and appointed to the Main

Air Force Command by the Deputy Chief of Operations. Perhaps Stalin remembered the aged general (Alexander Alexandrovich was already over seventy) - the opponent of the executed marshal and, on some whim, decided to elevate him. Fortunately, after the purge of the 37th and subsequent years, there were plenty of vacancies for senior command staff. So bizarrely intertwined human destinies. You really don't know where you will find and where you will lose.

But back to the unforgettable 1919. From the point of view of military subordination, Tukhachevsky's behavior was unacceptable, despite the fact that he was essentially right. However, during the years of the Civil War, such squabbles between lower-ranking commanders and higher-ranking officials and failure to follow orders were quite common among both Reds and Whites. For example, almost simultaneously with the quarrel between Tukhachevsky and Samoilo, at the end of May, on the other side of the front, the commander of the Siberian army, General Gaida, demanded from Kolchak the resignation of the leader Lebedev, and to a direct question whether he, Gaida, intends to continue to carry out the orders of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief, he answered: "Yes, but since they will not interfere with my, as the commander of the Siberian army, operational orders. As a result, at first they threatened to arrest the rebellious commander, but in the end they left him in his former position, with only a promise to carry out all orders, and not just those that please him. Very many orders both in the Red Army and in the White armies were carried out in this way: "in so far as". Tukhachevsky also sinned with this, but no less often he himself suffered from such practices on the part of subordinates or neighbors. In addition, communications did not work well, and orders and reports on the situation often did not reach the appropriate headquarters.

Young blood played in the veins of the commander. It seemed to the 27-year-old commander that he knew better than seasoned generals and general staff colonels how to wage a civil war so unlike the first world civil war.

It would be possible to apply to Tukhachevsky the unflattering characterization given by Budberg to the freshly minted young Kolchak generals from lieutenants, paramedics and staff captains under the influence of acquaintance with General Lebedev:

"The impression of the first meeting with our top is unimportant: too

he is puffed up and categorical, and in this part he resembles all revolutionary geeks who know how to spell, but do not know how to pronounce ... I have already seen this more than once during the Great War, in army headquarters, where strategic boys, sitting for hundreds versts from the front, they interfered in everything and squashed everyone. It's the same here: the same arrogant authority, the haste of purely emotional decisions, the cancellation of decisions made by the armies, impudent shouts and insulting remarks addressed to front-line commanders, and all this on an empty sauce of military illiteracy, lack of real military experience, misunderstanding of the psychology of the army, ignorance of the conditions the life of the troops and their condition. All these are the inevitable consequences of the lack of proper seniority, failure to complete military service and military combat suffering, complete ignorance of how orders are actually carried out and how all this responds to the troops ...

Most of the headquarters strategists commanded only companies; they know how to "command" but they do not know how to manage and are real

strategic babies. To their common grief, they are very determined, consider themselves geniuses, very touchy and quickly learned to abuse the power in their hands in order to bend and break everything that is not their way and they do not like it.

Tukhachevsky, although he had not even commanded a company before the revolution, also sinned with insolence against his superiors and probably already at that time considered himself a military genius with a great destiny. But from Kolchak's "wunderkinds" and "strategic babies" he differed greatly and for the better. He had a strategic outlook, far beyond the company. Budberg was indignant that Kolchak's generals from lieutenants and captains, striving to personally lead the troops on the attack, did not understand either the need to properly prepare new formations for battles, or the true state of transport and its ability to maintain a certain rate of transportation of troops, or the real combat capability of the armies of the civil war, much weaker than the armies in the war of 1914-1918. Most importantly, they cannot objectively approach the capabilities of their own troops and enemy troops. Baron emphasized that

"28-year-old generals from recent chief officers, very brave in bayonet and horse attacks, are unable to see beyond their young, very sharp and resolute nose, and for them their own discretion and will loose by circumstances constitute the highest law."

Tukhachevsky, on the contrary, did not lead troops into bayonet attacks, but he saw much further than his own nose. He just began his activities as a commander with new formations, having mobilized both former officers and everyone capable of bearing arms. At the end of 1919, in his lecture "National and Class Strategy," Tukhachevsky devoted special sections to the organization of transport, management, the pace of development of the operation, and the problems of staffing the army. Budberg noted one common feature of the generals of the civil war, both among the Reds and the Whites:

"With the revolution and the moral collapse that accompanied it and the falling away of many conventions, everything ambitious, greedy, audacious, and strong in the sphere of their audacity climbed to power; climbed in the vast majority of cases not for work and exploits, but for feeding and for reveling in all the blessings of power. .."

Tukhachevsky was one of those daring ones who needed power, including military power, for feat and glory, and not for obtaining material benefits associated with power, allowing them to live in luxury and satisfy the most bizarre whims (Mikhail Nikolayevich was not an ascetic, but he was You can't call him a lifeguard.) True, his strategic decisions were not always thought out and weighed. 'Trotsky, for example, highly appreciating Tukhachevsky as a "talented, but prone to excessive swiftness commander," in 1937 admitted:

"He lacked the ability to assess the military situation from all sides. There was always a clear element of adventurism in his strategy."

It was as if he was repeating Budberg's words about the young Kolchak generals who did not understand "the insurmountable conditions of what is called in military science by the common name" environment "...". Although Trotsky himself, in disputes with Tukhachevsky during the war, was sometimes ready to admit that

young commander. Lydia Nord cites Tukhachevsky's story about one of the skirmishes with the chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic:

"Trotsky arrived at the front to Tukhachevsky. Tukhachevsky was mapping the battle plan at that time. Trotsky made several remarks. The commander stood up, put a pencil in front of him, with which he marked on the map, and went out. "To your carriage," Tukhachevsky replied calmly. "You, Lev Davidovich, apparently decided to change places with me."

To Trotsky's credit, he was able to understand the absurdity of his behavior and after this incident more than once set Tukhachevsky as an example to other commanders. In 1938, responding to the Moscow political trials, Lev Davidovich named Tukhachevsky among "the best generals and leaders of the Red Army."

The Zlatoust operation, which opened the way for the Red Army through the Ural Range, was carried out almost exemplarily from the point of view of the canons of military art (despite the fact that simply "exemplary", without "almost", does not exist in nature - chance or unaccounted for circumstances always interfere in the plans of commanders). The area where the 5th Army was to operate was difficult to access for large masses of troops - wooded mountain ranges intersected by the valleys of the Ayi Yuryuzan rivers, the narrow defile of the railway and the BirsK-Zlatoust tract (Khanzhin had previously walked this tract in his insane offensive to the Volga). Tukhachevsky struck the main blow on the extreme left flank, from which the mentioned tract departed. Here he concentrated a shock group of 15 rifle regiments of the 26th and 27th divisions with strong artillery. And to the right of it, a 90-kilometer gap, unoccupied by troops, boldly left it against the almost inaccessible Kara-Tau ridge. The Whites, in turn, covered both the BirsK tract and the Zlatoust railway with two groups of approximately the same number. On the highway stood a badly battered Ural Corps with one and a half infantry and three weak cavalry divisions. The railway was held by two infantry divisions of the same corps and a cavalry brigade. In the rear, five crossings from the front line, there were two infantry divisions of the Ufa Corps of Kappel and the Izhevsk brigade - the most combat-ready in the entire Kolchak army, formed from the workers of the Izhevsk factories who rebelled against the Bolsheviks. The white infantry division was then already significantly inferior in terms of the number of personnel to the rifle division.

red divisions.

On the night of June 23-24, the 26th Division crossed the Ufa River near the village of Aidos and captured the exit from the Yuryuzan River defile. A day later, the main forces of the 27th division also overcame Ufa, advancing along the BirsK tract, and one of its brigades, moving along the railway, occupied the Asha-Balashovsky plant on June 29. The 26th division moved along the Yuryuzan valley. At times we had to walk along the river bed. The fighters were sometimes forced to drag guns across mountain passes on their own. Near the village of Duvan, the 27th division defeated parts of the Ural Corps and on July 1 reached the Ufa plateau, along which the path to Zlatoust, an important road junction, opened. With its capture, Kolchak's troops would no longer be able to hold the Urals for a long time. From Zlatoust the way to Western Siberia opened. However, the 26th division, which did not meet resistance, reached the plateau two days earlier than the 27th and suddenly attacked the enemy's 12th division, which was located on vacation. Parts of the latter concentrated in the area of the village of Nasibash, where they were able to

encircle three regiments of the 26th division, which, however, managed to break through and link up with their reserve regiment. The 4th White Division later engaged the 27th Division, which had just crossed the mountain passes, and was defeated. On July 6, the 26th division captured Nasibash. However, the main forces of the Kappel Corps and the Ural Corps managed to avoid encirclement due to the fact that the fighting delayed the advance of the bypass columns of the 5th Army. On July 10, Tukhachevsky launched an attack on Zlatoust with the forces of the 27th division along the shortest path, while the 26th was supposed to press the whites to the mountains. On July 13 the city fell.

The failure of the whites in the battle in the Urals, the Minister of War of Kolchak, Baron A.P. Budberg, without exaggeration, the most talented and intelligent general in the camp of the Eastern counter-revolution, commented in a diary entry dated July 12:

"The front completely collapsed, many units stopped following orders and without any fight, without seeing the enemy for several days, they go east, robbing the population, taking away horses, carts and fodder from them."

In general, the 5th Army met not too strong enemy resistance, took several thousand prisoners and suffered very insignificant losses. So, in the first half of July, they amounted to less than 200 people killed, wounded and missing.

After the loss of Zlatoust, Khanzhin's Western Army retreated to Chelyabinsk. The fall of this city threatened to interrupt the connection of the main forces of Kolchak with the troops operating in the south, in the regions of Orenburg and Uralsk, under the leadership of General G. A. Belov. Therefore, the Whites tried to defend Chelyabinsk. They wanted to lure the 5th Army into a trap, first surrendering the city, and then surrounding Tukhachevsky's divisions in it. But this plan required complex maneuvers and good training of fighters and commanders. Kolchak's troops, which consisted mostly of mobilized peasants and captured Red Army soldiers, were no longer suitable for large-scale regroupings and deep coverage. Minister of War Budberg was extremely skeptical about the chances of success of the plan. On July 25, he commented on the plan for the Chelyabinsk operation:

".. I learned that an extremely complex operation was planned to encircle the Chelyabinsk group of Reds, requiring tried and tested and reliable troops

the best old cadre type; the operation is complicated and artificial even for the old troops, since it requires perfect execution and the slightest penalty anywhere breaks everything and can lead to complete collapse. Such operations can only be carried out on the map or on large ostentatious maneuvers.

The state of the troops, their inability to maneuver, their inability to withstand breakthroughs and detours make it necessary to consider that for this operation 95% is for the fact that it will end in a complete disaster. According to the rough scheme shown to me at Headquarters, some divisions will have to fight on two or three fronts, that is, such a task has been given that our modern troops are not able to fulfill, because they cannot withstand flank fire and even signs of the enemy being in the rear and on the flanks. Undoubtedly, this is Lebedev's insane bet to save his faltering career and to prove his military genius ... "

And the next day, the pessimistic baron found out "some details of the chaotic operation born by the wise heads of Lebedev and Sakharov; it turned out that they planned to repeat the Mamaev massacre, with trapping the Reds with the help of the voluntary cleansing of the Chelyabinsk knot; they believe that the Reds will rush to this bait, after which they will be slammed there with the help of a very complex maneuver, in which the main role is assigned to the divisions of the Omsk district, which are completely raw in combat terms, and cavalry units.

From a paper, theoretical point of view, all this is very beautiful and tempting, so it is not surprising that the admiral, who understands nothing about land affairs, agreed to this operation; but from the point of view of the actual execution and evaluation of the means of execution, the operation is completely insane and possible only on the condition that the Reds represent a herd of sheep and go sour at the first discovery of our brilliant plan; and since there are no hopes for this, and since we are raising arms that are completely unsuitable for execution, then for me - at least - the whole chance of success lies in the string bag and the intercession of Nicholas the Wonderworker.

It is terrible to think that the most complex and difficult task of encircling the enemy by means of an extremely risky maneuver requiring an energetic breakthrough and a complex formation of battle formation is entrusted to units that have not yet been in battle. I saw many dozens of different divisions in the war and I think that only a few of them, and even then only at the very beginning of the war, were capable of performing such a maneuver, which is now assigned to militia units, with very weak personnel, with a lack of concepts and practice on the simplest maneuvers and with a forcibly recruited composition of soldiers who do not want to fight.

When the Whites left Chelyabinsk, an uprising of workers broke out there, as a result of which the Kolchak rearguards were badly battered. After the 5th Army entered the city on July 24, groups of generals Voitsekhovsky and Kappel went on the offensive on its flanks, numbering, respectively, 16 and 10 thousand bayonets and cavalry. However, the former Red Army men, who dominated Kappel, soon simply refused to go on the offensive, and the general preferred to leave them on the defensive, fearing treason. Tukhachevsky, on the other hand, significantly replenished his army at the expense of Chelyabinsk workers. On July 29, his troops went on the offensive and pushed the whites further east.

On August 7, 1919, the commander of the 5th Army was awarded the Order of the Red Banner, as noted in the order of the Revolutionary Military Council,

"for the following distinctions: the valiant troops of the 5th Army, under the skillful leadership of Commander Comrade Tukhachevsky, after stubborn battles, having defeated the enemy's manpower, crossed the Urals. Buguruslan, Bugulma, Birsk and Zlatoust fell under our blows thanks to bold, full of risk, wide Chelyabinsk was taken by the heroic units of the 3rd brigade of the 27th rifle division on July 24. The enormous success achieved by the army is mainly the result of the plan of operation, which was cleverly created by Comrade Tukhachevsky, which he firmly carried out in life".

Then the riskiness of maneuvers was unconditionally put to the credit of the commander. No one thought that in a year on the Polish front such a maneuver would lead the Soviet armies to complete

disaster.

The troops of the supreme ruler of Russia were able to stop only at the turn of the Tobol River. Here the 5th Army was entrusted with the main task: to cross the river, capture Petropavlovsk and, having defeated the 3rd White Army under the command of General K.V. Sakharov, which opposed it, go to the Kolchak capital Omsk. On August 20, she crossed the Tobol and reached the distant approaches to Petropavlovsk, having covered up to 180 kilometers in a short time. It was necessary to act in the Cossack regions, where the population in the Bolsheviks was hostile to the Bolsheviks. Therefore, Tukhachevsky had to create the Trinity and Kokchetav fortified areas to protect the flanks of the army from the Cossack partisan detachments. The commander led the offensive in two directions - along the Zverinogolovskaya - Petropavlovsk highway, where the main blow was delivered, and along the Kurgan - Petropavlovsk railway, hoping to envelop the enemy and force him to a quick retreat. The commander of the Eastern Front, V. A. Olderroge, a former general, insisted on a different solution - the concentration of all the forces of the army in the direction of the railway, where the main white grouping was concentrated. In addition, he took into account that the route passed through the Cossack regions, where one could expect especially strong resistance. Tukhachevsky, as usual, acted in his own way, continuing to operate with the main forces of the army in the direction of Zverinogolovskaya - Petropavlovsk. Later, in 1935, in the article "On the Eastern Front" published in Krasnaya Zvezda, he did not spare black colors for the former commander of the front, who was arrested back in the early 30s as part of the purge of the Red Army from former tsarist officers and therefore has not now been awarded an certifying reliability of the address "comrade":

"It's hard to understand where Trotsky was looking for such people! A man unknown to anyone, at best mediocre - Alderroge did everything in his power to ensure that our relentless pursuit of Kolchak failed."

Yes, Mikhail Nikolayevich knew how to subtly hint that his opponent was perhaps a saboteur and a hidden enemy of Soviet power!

Olderroge insisted on a return to his plan and a corresponding regrouping of troops. As Tukhachevsky recalled,

"There was a strong telegraph skirmish, but Olderroge categorically insisted on regrouping. The Whites took this mistake into account. Already on the outskirts of Petropavlovsk, they launched a counteroffensive,

pinned down units of the 5th Army from the front, and moved two infantry divisions from the south to the right flank and rear, "

the newly formed Siberian Cossack cavalry corps of the Siberian ataman General P. I. Ivanov-Rinov and the cavalry group of General Domozhirev. The corps of Siberian Cossacks defeated one of the brigades of the 26th Infantry Division, overturned Tukhachevsky's troops and drove them back to Tobol. "Unknown to anyone, at best incompetent" Olderroge saved the legendary "fifth army" from defeat, reinforcing Tukhachevsky's army with a division from the front reserve and throwing formations of the 3rd army against the left flank of the white strike group, which also forced the Tobol. Thanks to this, the 5th Army retreated across the river without heavy losses and held a bridgehead on the right bank of the Tobol. October 14, replenished by the mobilization of the workers of Chelyabinsk and others

Ural cities and the newly formed cavalry division, the 5th Army went on the offensive and on October 29 captured Petropavlovsk. The enemy retreated in disorder to Omsk. Here again a conflict arose between Alderoge and Tukhachevsky. Commander-5 wanted to send a cavalry division to intercept the Whites' retreat from Omsk, but the front commander insisted that it be sent to secure the right flank of the army from Kokchetav. It is difficult to say which of them was actually right. On the one hand, the flank threat turned out to be significantly exaggerated: the Cossacks retreated from Kokchetav to Akmolinsk. On the other hand, as Tukhachevsky himself admitted, during the operation the actions of the cavalry division "did not have the character of sufficient decisiveness", as a result of which it "did not achieve all the results that ... could achieve." So it is unlikely that this division would have been able to prevent the withdrawal of the main Kolchak forces from Omsk. Rather, she would have been defeated. In any case, the absence of a cavalry division in the rear of the Omsk group did not have a significant impact on the outcome of the operation. On November 14, 1919, the capital of the supreme ruler of Russia fell under the blows of the 3rd and 5th Soviet armies. On the way from Petropavlovsk to Omsk, 45,000 prisoners were taken; in Omsk itself, another 16,000 Kolchak soldiers and officers, wounded and sick with typhus, were captured.

For the victory over Kolchak, the 5th Army was awarded the Order of the Red Banner and the Honorary Red Banner of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee. And on December 17, 1919, its commander was awarded the highest award at that time - the Honorary Revolutionary Weapon, which was a gilded checker with the Order of the Red Banner built into the scabbard. Such a distinction was granted to Tukhachevsky

"for personal courage, broad initiative, energy, diligence and knowledge of the matter, shown by him during the victorious march of the valiant Red Army to the east, culminating in the capture of the city of Omsk."

In Omsk, which had just been liberated from the Kolchakites, Tukhachevsky, after a long separation, met his friend Kulyabko, who had been appointed a member of the Sibrevkom. There was something symbolic in this meeting. Tukhachevsky broke up with Kulyabko when he left for the Eastern Front, it was to him that he first reported his first success on the Eastern Front, and met with his friend again on the day of the defeat of Kolchak and the actual liquidation of the Eastern Front. The portrait of the commander on that significant day was captured in his memoirs by a fighter of the 5th Army

N. V. Krasnopol'sky:

"He was a handsome young man in a fine Barnaul sheepskin coat, felt boots and a white Siberian hare hat with long ears, which, if necessary, could cover his neck."

Somewhat exotic for a military leader, but tastefully chosen attire was dictated by the severe Omsk frost.

Now the organized resistance of the main white forces in the east has almost ceased. Siberian partisans and frosts were supposed to finish with them. Since the end of the summer, the Red divisions were being rapidly transferred from east to south, against Denikin. After the fall of Omsk, Tukhachevsky was also recalled to Moscow. The brunt of the fight against the troops of the supreme ruler fell on his former 5th army, and for

Mikhail Nikolayevich secured the glory of the winner Kolchak. He won a solid authority among the leaders of the state. At a meeting of political workers of the Red Army in December 1919, Trotsky called Tukhachevsky "one of the best army commanders", especially noting his "strategic talent". On December 18, Tukhachevsky was received by Lenin, who asked him to draw up a report on the experience of using military specialists in the 5th Army. The commander did not keep himself waiting and the very next day he sent the text of the report to the deputy chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council E. M. Sklyansky. Tukhachevsky especially emphasized the role of those former tsarist officers who had already managed to become members of the party. He had a rather low estimate of the pre-revolutionary officer corps as a whole:

"It is customary for us to believe that the generals and officers of the old army are in the full sense of the word not only specialists, but also experts in military affairs ... In fact, the Russian officer corps of the old army never possessed either one or the other quality. part of it consisted of persons who received a limited military education, completely downtrodden and devoid of any initiative.

Pointing to the reform of the military school after the Russian-Japanese war, Tukhachevsky made a reservation that its results began to affect only by 1908-1910. That's why

"a well-trained command staff, thoroughly familiar with modern military science and imbued with the spirit of bold warfare, is only among the young officers ... A significant part of it, as the most active, died in the imperialist war. Most of the surviving officers, the most active part, deserted after the demobilization and collapse of the tsarist army to Kaledin, the only center of counter-revolution at that time. This explains the abundance of good bosses in Denikin. Among the old officers, capable bosses are an exception. "

The report reflected the personal experience of the army commander, who repeatedly clashed with the communist commissars and with higher non-party chiefs from staff officers and generals. Here Tukhachevsky contrasts young officers in small ranks with their

older comrades, generals and staff officers - in the rank of colonels and lieutenant colonels. The 26-year-old army commander believed that "from the midst of ... precocious officers" who had passed an accelerated course

training during the war

"We have more good commanders than from among the old officers."

Since many of the young officers were at that time "very

responsible positions", Tukhachevsky made a bold and radical conclusion that

"the possibility of command is not at all fraught with such difficulties that they would not be achievable for our party comrades."

He argued:

"Only in the service of the general staff, in staff work, does the old officer have an advantage over the newcomers."

The author of the report called for

"their own, communist command staff, which will not only be energetic and amateur, not only allowing the Communist Party to reliably penetrate the masses of the Red Army and secure it behind itself,"

but take a step forward

"in relation to the meaningful leadership of the army in the war."

Tukhachevsky convinced Sklyansky, Trotsky and Lenin of the need to establish unity of command by promoting military commissars and communist commanders from among junior officers and non-commissioned officers to command posts:

"Among the military commissars and junior command staff there are many who are worthy of being commanders in responsible positions. You just need to give wide scope for promotion and widely appoint military commissars to command positions, giving some of them a brief theoretical training. In any case, all military commissars are from former officers or non-commissioned officers should be immediately converted to the command staff. It is only necessary to throw out the slogan about the transition to the communist command staff (in the main mass), and this command staff will appear, since it is already available in a hidden form ... In the 5th Army for a long time this slogan is put forward, and the commanding staff in it is all communist, and combat reality also proves its superiority over the generals and old officers.

The communist commanders, according to Tukhachevsky, should very soon, even before the end of the civil war, oust the former tsarist officers from the Red Army, especially in high ranks, who did not belong to the Bolshevik Party:

"Incapable military experts, and there are a lot of them, must be removed. Their places are taken by young and capable revolutionary leaders."

The young commander complained:

"Very often in our country, appointments to responsible positions are made not from among junior, distinguished commanders, but from among rear workers, old military experts. This order is very difficult for the front. Strategic and tactical methods begin to be carried out that do not correspond to the situation, junior revolutionary commanders do not consider these bosses by authorities, and, in general, things are not going well.

And insisted:

"It is necessary to give wide scope for the advancement of the young, nascent revolutionary command personnel, the most capable and indispensable for the Red Army."

Tukhachevsky's report reflected the growing conflict

generations in the Red Army. The commander considered himself the most capable of the "nascent young revolutionary leaders" and defended them

priority in appointment to senior command positions. At the same time, he deliberately exaggerated the role of "active" junior officers in Denikin's army. After all, in fact, all the highest command positions in the Armed Forces of the South of Russia were occupied by generals or, at best, colonels, like the commanders of cavalry corps K.K. Mamontov and A.G. Shkuro. On the contrary, the victory of the Reds over the troops of Admiral Kolchak was largely facilitated by the fact that here the Whites did not have so many generals and senior officers in high command positions. For example, the chief of staff of the supreme ruler, urgently promoted to general, D. A. Lebedev, before the revolution, was just a staff captain. The same career generals as the commander of the troops of the Directory V. G. Boldyrev and the Minister of War, Baron A. TsP. Budberg, were either forced to emigrate under Kolchak or removed from an active role in commanding troops and planning operations. In the Red Army, many fronts and armies were led (as commanders, their assistants and chiefs of staff) by former tsarist generals, colonels and lieutenant colonels. The post of commander-in-chief was occupied by colonels I. I. Vatsetis and S. S. Kamenev, and the chiefs of staff under them were generals P. TsP. Lebedev and M. D. Bonch-Bruевич. Then, after the end of the civil war, generals and colonels, following the recommendations of Tukhachevsky, and not only him, were quietly removed to teaching, and in 1930, as part of the Chekist operation "Spring", most of the survivors were arrested on charges of an imaginary monarchist conspiracy, and some were even shot. True, most of those arrested were released during the year, but among those who survived until the 37th, the lucky ones who died in their beds were literally counted in units. However, it was still too early to refuse the services of regular non-Communist officers. Trotsky and Lenin understood this very well and did not follow Tukhachevsky's advice. And they were in no hurry to refuse commissars in the army. The chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council reasonably noted that many commanders might join the party for purely opportunistic reasons - to get rid of the commissar's guardianship, and the Bolsheviks would not be able to fully rely on such. The abolition of the commissariat for those military leaders who, like Tukhachevsky, joined the party at the very beginning of the revolution or even before 1917, would have created discord in the structure of command and control and would have placed in an extremely ambiguous position those commanders under whom the commissars were retained.

In the report, Tukhachevsky defiantly distanced himself from the bulk of the former tsarist officers mobilized into the Red Army:

"Our old officer corps, completely unfamiliar with the fundamentals of Marxism, cannot and does not want to understand the class struggle and the necessity and inevitability of the dictatorship of the proletariat (read: Mikhail Nikolayevich himself mastered the basics of Marxism long ago and understood the essence of the class struggle and the inevitability of the proletarian dictatorship. - B. S.) ... Many generals and officers honestly serve the Soviet Republic, but in this respect they are guided by the national idea, and not by their solidarity with the working class. Every officer would gladly rename the Red Army "people's" (the paradox here is that, as we remember, that's how the People's army was called Komuch's army, which, nevertheless, caused only irritation among a number of monarchically-minded officers who served in it. - B.S.) and in the full sense of the word

does not understand the meaning of a class army. With such a level of political development of the officers, of course, it is difficult for him to understand the foundations of the civil war ... "

The Bolshevik leaders were not stupid or naive people. It is unlikely that they fully believed that yesterday's lieutenant of the guards so soon became a fanatical Marxist. The party leaders, probably, in the depths of their souls, always suspected Tukhachevsky of adherence to the national Russian, and not to the international idea, and therefore there was no complete, absolute trust in the marshal.

On December 24, 1919, at the Academy of the Red General Staff, Tukhachevsky gave a program lecture "National and Class Strategy", where he tried to apply Marxist teaching to the field of military art and the conditions of warfare. He cited as an example a conversation with the General Staff officer:

"I remember how last spring one of our prominent military leaders, an old officer of the general staff, spoke of the old officer corps: "We are not capable of waging your war (it is typical to oppose the lieutenant-communist to senior officers of the tsarist army on the basis of the principle "we "-" you ". - B. S.). We are prepared for waging a European war, for leading mass armies, but we are not adapted to the kind of war that you are waging, for example, in Ukraine.

Tukhachevsky, "without denying the eternal foundations of strategy," defended some new laws characteristic of civil war. He emphasized that, unlike a national war, a plan for such a war cannot be drawn up before it begins, but

"The army of the insurgent, both revolutionary and counter-revolutionary, will be hastily put together, i.e., will be the product of improvisation."

Tukhachevsky declared:

"Civil war by its very nature requires decisive, bold offensive actions. Revolutionary energy and courage dominate everything else."

Unfortunately, in Mikhail Nikolayevich himself, "revolutionary courage" sometimes dominated common sense. How else to explain the disregard for strategic reserves declared and justified by him:

"Strategic reserves, the usefulness of which has always been doubtful, are completely inapplicable in our war ... The fronts of the armies are huge. Communication routes are in complete ruin. At the same time, operations are developing at a rapid pace. decisive moment by completely unnecessary and harmful self-debilitation.

In practice, the young army commander very often did not care about any reserves at all. And when, already as a front commander, he had to act in Poland, where, unlike Siberia, the network of communications was quite dense, the lack of reserves played, among other things, a fatal role.

Tukhachevsky attached great importance to the political factor in the civil war, but advocated the independence of military leaders from politicians in making strategic decisions:

".. There is no reason to believe that in a civil war ... politics is allowed to interfere in the ways to achieve the set strategy

goals. The propositions advanced by some about the right of politics to intervene in strategy in a civil war must be rejected as an unproven deviation from the general principles.

At the same time, he pointed out the need to take into account the class composition of the population of the territories where hostilities are unfolding, and called for treating those areas that were recaptured from the whites as conquered lands on which a strict occupation regime should be established:

"We can really conquer colossal territories with small armies, and, moreover, always having a secure rear. This is achieved on our part by the rapid strengthening of the power of the workers and peasants in the occupied areas. area".

A year and a half later, Tukhachevsky had the opportunity to restore the "power of the workers and peasants" in the rebellious Tambov province with "iron and blood" himself.

Taking into account the experience of commanding the 8th Army in the Don region, Tukhachevsky actually substantiated the correctness of the plan chosen by Vatsetis and Trotsky for delivering the main blow through the proletarian Donbass from the "class point of view" using the "opposite" method:

"Things get much worse if in the rear we have centers that are "dead" for us. They require a large expenditure of troops to keep these centers in obedience. Such rear lines must be avoided. The main reason for the collapse of our campaign on the Southern Front this spring was in the fact that the main forces of the front were moved not where we would have had Soviet vital rears in the Donets basin, but where we had "dead" rears, requiring the allocation of large garrisons to hold the vast Don steppes behind them. space was not taken into account, and our armies were defeated.

He proved the necessity of massing all the forces on a small section of the front, because due to the poor state of transport, the enemy would not be able to quickly concentrate enough troops here to repel the blow with a "crushing hammer":

"... We can achieve an overwhelming superiority of forces in certain sectors of the front, and this, due to the impossibility for the enemy to equalize forces in time, will bring him inevitable defeat ... The time required for the enemy to regroup is very large. The pace of development of operations in our war ... is remarkable for its extraordinary speed ... We will retain superiority over the enemy even during the vast length of the pursuit.

In addition to this advantage, there is also the fact that the upcoming

mobilizes related classes in the occupied areas. The defeated armies in the civil war are distinguished by the fact that the natives of the lost regions desert and remain in their native places. Thus, as one advances, the one who advances is continuously strengthened, and the one who retreats is constantly weakened. It is also one of the characteristic phenomena of the civil war.

In national wars, the retreating one, retreating to his communications, easily receives reinforcements, while the advancing one is constantly weakened to provide rears. In our war, an offensive against the "dead" for

reminds us of the centers of these conditions of national war. They can be smoothed out only by the systematic colonization of conquered areas with a great loss of time.

Superiority of forces can be achieved not only by transfers and regroupings, but also by a concentric offensive (so beloved by Tukhachevsky. - B.S.), if the enemy does not offer serious resistance to the point of concentration.

By organizing uprisings and partisan actions behind enemy lines, we can also create a favorable balance of power.

In our warfare we continually sin in the sense of violating the stated principles. We are conducting our offensives on broad fronts in endless, weak cordons. We hardly practice transfers and regroupings, we do not create crushing fists, and therefore our struggle on the fronts annoyingly turns into some kind of dance class (Mikhail Nikolaevich here recalled the golden days of the cadet corps. - B. S.).

To achieve success in our war, more than ever, we must be bold, quick; more than ever, one must be able to maneuver, and in order to consciously master these qualities, it is necessary to study the military art of all times and peoples, it is necessary to be able to make a scientific-critical analysis of the conditions for waging our war.

Tukhachevsky's trouble was that he considered any future war with the participation of Soviet Russia as a continuation of the civil war and counted that the European proletariat would certainly come to the aid of the Red Army. And the war with Poland in 1920 was considered not only by the then commander of the Western Front, but also by most of the communist leaders as a civil war, and not a national one. Therefore, the enemy was called not just "Poles", but "White Poles", and the good old chauvinistic "Polish lords" acquired a purely class color - the "lords" meant the hated Polish nobles, the gentry, and at the same time - capitalists. When it turned out that the Soviet-Polish war was, after all, a classic national war, that when retreating, Polish soldiers were by no means in a hurry to go home, and even more so to join the ranks of the Red Army victoriously advancing on Warsaw, that the advancing, as usual, in wars between states, it gradually weakens, breaking away from its bases, and the retreating one, approaching sources of replenishment with people and weapons, strengthens, then Tukhachevsky's troops were almost completely destroyed overnight. Unfortunately, the young commander did not fully learn that harsh lesson. And twelve years later, in his conceptual work New Questions of War, he optimistically predicted:

"In the war of the imperialists against the USSR, the workers of the capitalist countries, who are fighting to turn the imperialist war into a civil war, will create their own Red Armies, just as the Polish workers did in 1920 (? -B.S.), and will join ranks of our Red Army in order to support and ensure its victory, both over its own bourgeoisie and over the bourgeoisie of the whole world.

It turned out even worse that the enemies of Tukhachevsky in the Red Army, who ultimately achieved the fall and death of the marshal, completely shared the attitude towards the exclusively offensive nature of the actions of the Soviet troops in a future war and even calculated to help

"class brothers" on the other side of the front. This largely contributed to the catastrophic start of the Great Patriotic War for the USSR.

Shortly after the report "National and Class Strategy", taking advantage of the two-month forced respite that presented itself, Tukhachevsky wrote an article closely adjacent to the report, "Statistics in the Civil War." She appeared in 1920 in the first issue of the Revolution and War magazine. The author of the article defended the "class approach" and internationalism, arguing:

"A statistical study of the population for a civil war will primarily study its class grouping, its property status, its class ... correlation, estates, etc. The national question in this case fades into the background. True, in civil wars we see phenomena when certain classes join one or another belligerent nation, but this will only be the case when class enmity coincides with national enmity, that is, when a certain nation is exploited by another. Sometimes even a religious movement can coincide with a class movement: among peoples with little culture " .

And he criticized the specialists of the All-Russian General Staff from former generals for the fact that in their assessment of certain outlying theaters of military operations, they regarded the predominance of Russians in the population as a factor that was generally favorable for the Red Army.

"It is extremely interesting to know," Tukhachevsky inquired mockingly, "with whom, in the opinion of the All-Glavstabs, we are waging war. Is it not with the "basurmans", or with foreigners in general. Why does the All-Glavstab prefer Russian to all other nationalities? Or, maybe, He no longer considers Russian counter-revolutionaries to be Russians and boldly turns them into foreigners, along with all their "glorious" leaders: Kolchak, Denikin and a good half of the old Russian officer corps?

Something very diligently demonstrates Mikhail Nikolayevich his internationalism and Marxism. As if trying to convince himself of the truth of communist dogmas. And not only himself, but also attentive readers of a higher rank, he assures that he has no idea of turning the Red Army into a national Russian army, that it is not the national idea, but solidarity with the working class that drives his actions. For the sake of the happiness of the proletariat, the former Lieutenant Tukhachevsky makes a career in the Red Army...

the greatness of Russia? After all, Sabaneev claims that in response to his reproachful remark after the clownish "Bolshevik Mass":

"How is it that you are a Bolshevik and a party member?" - Tukhachevsky answered quite seriously: "I am not a Bolshevik, but now I am on my way with the Bolsheviks."

Tukhachevsky was again sent south to finish off Denikin. But he did not receive a new appointment immediately. At the end of December, the winner of Kolchak was appointed to command the 13th Army of the Southern Front, aimed at the Crimea. Tukhachevsky arrived at the headquarters of the front in Kursk, but the commander A.I. Egorov did not put him in the army. On January 19, 1920, Mikhail Nikolaevich turned to the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic with a desperate letter:

"I appeal to you with a convincing request: free me from

unemployment. In shtayugozape (January 10, 1920, the Southern Front was renamed the South-Western. - B.S.) I have been sitting aimlessly for almost three weeks, and just doing nothing for two months. I can't get a reason for the delay or a further appointment. If for almost two years of commanding various armies I have any merit, then I ask you to allow me to use my strength in live work, and if there is none at the front, then I ask you to give it in the matter of transport or military commissars.

The appeal became known to Lenin, who literally on the eve or immediately after this letter, not yet knowing about its existence, in a note to Sklyansky, where he ordered the extrajudicial execution of Kolchak, extradited by the Czechs in Irkutsk, and explained how and when it would be necessary to announce the execution of the unlucky supreme ruler, was also interested: "Where is Tukhachevsky?"

Obviously, not without the participation of the chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, the commander-13, which never took place, was appointed on January 24 as temporary commander of the Caucasian Front, which acted against Denikin's main forces on the borders of the Don and Manyh rivers. For a long time it was not possible to break through the fortified positions of the Whites, which was one of the reasons for the removal from the post of front commander V.I. Shorin, who also had a sharp conflict with the influential leadership of the 1st Cavalry Army - S.M. Voroshilov. The latter believed that their army was deliberately thrown into attacks on enemy fortifications without infantry support. The leaders of the Cavalry were supported by a member of the Politburo I.V. Stalin, who was close to them since the battles near Tsaritsyn, and was then a member of the Revolutionary Military Council of the neighboring Southwestern Front. However, this time Tukhachevsky did not immediately take up his duties. Some kind of struggle continued around the post of commander of the main Caucasian front at that time in the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic, which is not fully understood even today. In any case, Tukhachevsky arrived at the front headquarters in Saratov only on February 3, 1920, and, already without the prefix "acting", the next day he took up new duties. On the day of Tukhachevsky's arrival in Saratov, Stalin said in a conversation by direct wire to the Caucasian front to Budyonny and Voroshilov:

"Eight days ago, when I was in Moscow, on the day I received your cipher telegram (that is, January 23, when Budyonny and Voroshilov sent a telegram to Lenin, Trotsky and Stalin with a request to remove either Shorin or them from their posts, since Shorin allegedly

would have put the Cavalry on the brink of death with his unrealistic orders. - B.S.)
achieved the resignation of Shorin and the appointment of a new commander
Tukhachevsky - the conqueror of Siberia and the winner of Kolchak. Ordzhonikidze has been
appointed to the Revolutionary Council of your front, and he treats the Cavalry very well."

On February 5, Tukhachevsky and G.K. Ordzhonikidze sent a soothing, very benevolent
telegram to Budyonny and Voroshilov:

"..Unpleasantly struck by the current situation in the relations between the
neighboring armies and some individuals with the heroic red cavalry. We are deeply
convinced that the old friendly relations will be renewed and the merits and art of the
Cavalry Army will be appreciated."

At that time, as we see, the antagonism between Tukhachevsky, on the one hand

side, and Stalin, Voroshilov and Budyonny - on the other, was not. Stalin fussed about
appointing Tukhachevsky as front commander (before that, Mikhail Nikolayevich
commanded only armies), and he was quite loyal to the Cavalry, taking the side of its
command in disputes with the front headquarters and the commander of the neighboring 8th
Army G. Ya. Sokolnikov. Discord began later, during a campaign in Poland.
And it all ended with the fact that Stalin and Voroshilov in the 37th sanctioned the massacre
of Tukhachevsky, and Budyonny was among those who pronounced a predetermined
death sentence on the marshal. And even more than four decades later, when Tukhachevsky
and his comrades had already been rehabilitated, Semyon Mikhailovich, publishing the first
book of memoirs "The Path Traveled" in 1958, preferred, quoting a conversation with Stalin,
to omit the words about the appointment of a new commander of the winner Kolchak.
Although Tukhachevsky was no longer an "enemy of the people," Budyonny retained his
strong dislike for him until the end of his days.

Tukhachevsky's friendship with Ordzhonikidze began from the Caucasian
front, which continued until the suicide of Grigory Konstantinovich in February
1937. The death of Ordzhonikidze and his conflict with Stalin in the last months of his
life also became one of the reasons for the fall of Tukhachevsky.

In the meantime, Mikhail Nikolaevich quite successfully commanded the
Caucasian Front. He turned the 1st Cavalry Army and the shock group of the 10th Army,
advancing on the Tikhoretskaya station, to the north in time, which made it possible to
suddenly attack the cavalry group of General A.A. from February 25 to March 2, 1920,
defeat her in the largest oncoming cavalry battle of the Civil War. Now
the whites almost non-stop rolled back to the Caucasus Mountains and Novorossiysk, the
only port on the Black Sea coast of the Caucasus, from where they could be
evacuated to the Crimea held by the corps of General Ya. A. Slashchov. Tukhachevsky,
during the Kuban-Novorossiysk operation in March, did not allow Denikin to calmly carry out
the evacuation from Novorossiysk. The main part of the Armed Forces of the South of
Russia was captured during a vigorous pursuit. Only the heavily battered Volunteer
Corps and a smaller part of the Don Army managed to leave for the Crimea, while most
of the Don people, who were not allowed into Georgia by the Georgian government,
surrendered to the Red Army at the end of April in the Sochi region. The Kuban
army was also defeated, the remnants of which took refuge in

mountains.

Now Tukhachevsky, to the loud title of the winner of Kolchak, added a no less loud one - the winner of Denikin, inflicting the last mortal blow on the troops of "Tsar Anton" (as the subordinates jokingly called the gentle and kind general to the soldiers) the last mortal blow. On March 27, 1920, the commander and the Revolutionary Military Council of the Caucasian Front reported to Lenin about the captured prisoners and trophies. More than 12,000 officers and up to 100,000 soldiers of the Denikin army, more than 330 guns and over 500 machine guns, more than 200,000 rifles, wagons, ammunition, 240 steam locomotives, 6 armored trains, significant reserves of oil and gasoline fell into the hands of the Soviet troops ...

And Tukhachevsky, on orders from Moscow, was already considering a campaign for the Greater Caucasus Range. On April 21, he signed a directive, according to

which the 11th Army was supposed to invade Azerbaijan on April 27 and move swiftly to Baku. But Mikhail Nikolayevich himself did not have a chance to directly supervise the operation to send troops into the Transcaucasus. He was given another order - to the West!

Give Warsaw! Battle of two marshals

The campaign against Warsaw became at the same time Tukhachevsky's "finest hour" and his "black day" in the Red Army, which, under the leadership of the young front commander, suffered its most crushing defeat in the civil war. Later, in 1923, Tukhachevsky tried to justify himself in the book "The Campaign for the Vistula", written on the basis of a course of lectures at the Military Academy of the Red Army. He admitted his guilt - the war was lost by strategy, not by politics, by the military, not by the leaders of the revolution. If the commander had tried to say otherwise, his career would have ended instantly. Tukhachevsky would not have become Marshal, but, who knows, maybe the former second lieutenant of the Life Guardsman would have passed the bitter cup of humiliation and death in the 37th. He claimed: „

Politics presented the Red Army with a difficult, risky and daring task. But how can this mean incorrectness ?! (In the sense that do not doubt, dear comrades Lenin, Trotsky and Stalin, in my trustworthiness: there is no thought of criticizing you. - B.S.) There was not a single great deed that was not bold and decisive. And if we compare the October Revolution with our external socialist offensive, then, of course, the October task was much more daring, much more challenging. The Red Front had the opportunity to fulfill the task assigned to it, but it did not fulfill it.

How did the events develop that eventually led to the Red Army's march on Warsaw? The Soviet-Polish armed conflict began in January 1919 with a clash of Polish troops with units of the Red Army near Vilna. In the spring, hostilities spread to Belarus, and in the summer - to Ukraine. The Polish side sought to create an alliance with Lithuania, Belarus and Ukraine, with its leading role in this new "federation" (although this term was used, the creation of a single state was not supposed). At the same time, Polysya claimed Vilna, Eastern Galicia, part of Volhynia and some border regions of Belarus. It was assumed that in the future Latvia, Estonia, Finland and Romania would join the federation. Soviet Russia, in turn, sought to establish communist governments in all these states, and in

further - to the accession of the territories of these countries. The establishment of Soviet power in Poland was seen as a prologue to the revolution in Germany and the beginning of the "world proletarian revolution". When, after the collapse of Germany in the First World War, the Red Army entered Lithuania, Belarus and Ukraine, separate units intended for the "liberation" of Poland began to form from the local Polish population, which provoked a protest from the Polish government. Later, when during the Warsaw operation, Tukhachevsky's troops invaded the so-called Danzig corridor, the Germans living there managed to form a German rifle brigade to march on Berlin, which did not take place only because of the subsequent defeat of the armies of the Western Front.

Taking advantage of the diversion of the main Soviet forces, first to fight Kolchak, and then Denikin, the Polish troops by the end of August 1919

years, without encountering significant resistance, they reached the line Dvinsk (Daugavpils) - Polotsk - Bobruisk - r. Bird - Kamenetz-Podolsky. However, Denikin's success prompted the head of the Polish state and supreme commander-in-chief, Marshal Jozef Pilsudski, to stop the offensive, allowing the Red Army to withdraw the main forces from the Western Front and throw them to defeat the Armed Forces of the South of Russia. The victory of the Whites, who did not recognize Polish independence, was even more evil for the Poles at that moment than the victory of the Bolsheviks, who at least formally recognized Poland's right to self-determination. In September 1919, the fighting between the Polish army and the troops of the Ukrainian People's Republic, led by Symon Petlyura, also stopped.

During the period when General Denikin threatened Moscow directly, the Soviet government, like the Poles, showed a tendency to resolve the conflict peacefully. However, the situation changed with the defeat of the Volunteer Army. In December 1919, Poland left the peace proposals of the Soviet side unanswered. With the final defeat of Denikin, the Bolsheviks again seriously thought about the possibility of exporting the revolution to Europe on Red Army bayonets. As early as February 27, 1920, Lenin telegraphed the Revolutionary Military Council of the Western Front: "We must give the slogan to prepare for war with Poland." This was a response to the Polish demand put forward three weeks earlier to withdraw all Soviet troops from the territories lying within the borders of the Polish Commonwealth before 1772, that is, before the first partition of Poland. However, even before the Polish preconditions for concluding peace were received, Lenin foresaw that the Poles would make "absolutely impracticable, even arrogant demands" and ordered "all attention to be directed to the preparation and strengthening of the Western Front." War between Russia and Poland was becoming inevitable, and both sides were striving for it, regardless of the actions of a potential adversary. On March 5, Polish troops captured Mazyr and continued to prepare for a larger offensive. On April 21, 1920, an agreement was signed in Warsaw with Petlyura, according to which his government was recognized as the only legal authority in Ukraine, and in return ceded Eastern Galicia to Poland up to the border of the Zbruch River. Two days later, a military convention was concluded on the joint actions of the Polish and Ukrainian armies against the Bolsheviks. The Red Army was also preparing for war. On March 14, Lenin telegraphed Tukhachevsky and Ordzhonikidze to the Caucasian front, which was finishing off Denikin:

"The Poles, apparently, will make war with us inevitable. Therefore

the main task now is not the Caucasian Labor Army (Caucasian Labor Army. - B.S.), but the preparation of the fastest transfer of maximum troops to the Western Front. Focus all your efforts on this task. Use the prisoners arch-energetically for the same."

Three days later, in a conversation by direct wire with Stalin, Vladimir Ilyich demanded that Denikin's troops in the Crimea be liquidated as soon as possible, since

"news has just come from Germany that a battle is going on in Berlin and the Spartacists (members of the communist Spartak Union. - B.S.) have taken possession of part of the city. free hands, for a civil war in Germany may

force us to move west to help the communists"

(This time the chairman of the Council of People's Commissars was mistaken: it was not the communists who fought on the streets of Berlin, but right-wing putschists, led by the landowner Wolfgang Kapp). The idea to help the communist revolution in Germany with Red Army bayonets was constantly present in Ilyich.

On March 20, Commander-in-Chief S. S. Kamenev proposed to Lenin

"in view of the importance of the Polish front and in view of the seriousness of the forthcoming operations here ... by the time of decisive operations, transfer to the Western Front the commander of the now Caucasian Front, Tukhachevsky, who skillfully and decisively carried out the last operations to defeat Denikin's armies."

The reputation of Mikhail Nikolaevich as a commander was already so high that it was considered necessary to appoint him commander of the most important front.

This time, Marshal Jozef Pilsudski acted as Tukhachevsky's opponent, who had much more significant experience of participation in the First World War than the 27-year-old commander of the Western Front. The marshal was twice as old - by the time of the battle near Warsaw he was 53 years old. In World War I, Pilsudski was in general positions - he commanded the 1st brigade of the Polish legions formed by him in the Austrian army, then he was the Minister of War of the Kingdom of Poland created by Germany and Austria-Hungary, before being imprisoned by the Germans in Magdeburg prison in 1917, after refusing to allow Polish soldiers to swear allegiance to the German Kaiser. The fact that Pilsudski was more experienced than Tukhachevsky in leading large masses of people in conditions of a more "correct" than civil, World War I, greatly helped him during the Soviet-Polish war, which in many respects (the presence of lines of trenches and barriers, a relatively high density troops and artillery, and finally, the clash between two national armies) was still closer to the battles of 1914-1918 than to the combat practice of the civil war in Russia. The victory on the Vistula was a real "finest hour" of the "chief of the Polish state" and helped him establish his dictatorship in Poland six years later. Who knows, if Tukhachevsky had won then, would it have changed his fate, would it not have made him a real "Soviet Bonaparte" in the future?

On April 25, the Polish offensive began in Ukraine, and on the 28th, the plan proposed by Tukhachevsky to defeat the Poles was approved. On the 29th, Mikhail Nikolayevich took command of the troops of the Western Front in Smolensk. To his sister-in-law Lydia, Nord Tukhachevsky allegedly said that the time of the civil war was a difficult test for him, since "he had to fight against his own." But on the Polish front, Tukhachevsky said, he "felt like a fish in water," because here he already had to fight not against Russian people with other cockades, but against an external, foreign enemy. Similar feelings were experienced by thousands of Russian officers and generals, including A. A. Brusilov, who expressed their readiness, under the influence of patriotic feelings, to join the Red Army to fight the Poles.

On May 7, the armies of Pilsudski and Petliura captured Kyiv and reached the Dnieper on a broad front, capturing bridgeheads on its eastern bank.

To help the Soviet South-Western Front, Tukhachevsky, without waiting for the concentration of all forces, launched an attack on Svetsyany, Molodechno and Borisov on May 14 and occupied these cities. On May 22, in the midst of the operation, he was highly honoured. Together with S. S. Kamenev and A. I. Egorov, Tukhachevsky was assigned to the General Staff without graduating from the academy. This act marked the recognition of the military art of the commander of the Western Front. In the order of the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic issued on this occasion, the unusual decision was motivated as follows:

"... M. N. Tukhachevsky joined the Red Army and, possessing natural military abilities, continued to continuously expand his theoretical knowledge in military affairs. Acquiring new theoretical knowledge in military affairs every day, M. N. Tukhachevsky skillfully carried out the planned operations and excellently led the troops both as part of the army and commanding the armies of the fronts of the Republic, and gave the Soviet Republic brilliant victories over its enemies on the Eastern and Caucasian fronts.

However, this time the victory, all the more brilliant, was still far away. Tukhachevsky was not helped either by the "new theoretical knowledge in military affairs" obtained by sleepless nights from reading the works of the classics. Assignment to the General Staff, one might say, "jinxed" the success in Belarus. On May 30, Polish troops counterattacked and, with the HELP of the approaching reserves, restored the situation. Only the 15th army of A.I. Kork was able to hold a small foothold in the Polotsk region. Tukhachevsky did not have any reserves. He put all his strength into the first strike, counting on the reserves - to create later, from new ones - divisions transferred from the Caucasian and Eastern fronts, from Petrograd and the interior districts. But these divisions were late for the start of the Polish counteroffensive. Meanwhile, near Kiev, the 1st Cavalry Army of Budyonny, which went on the offensive on the same day as the start of the Polish counterattack in Belarus, broke through the front and on June 8 cut off the supply lines of the Kyiv group of Poles. Polish troops began to hastily retreat from the Dnieper. Pilsudski, counting that Tukhachevsky's armies had not yet recovered from the defeat suffered, transferred several divisions from Belarus to fight Budyonny's cavalry, which he considered not so difficult to defeat. The marshal's calculations were based on the experience of the First World War, when the cavalry showed complete helplessness in the conditions of positional warfare, a solid front line, full-profile trenches, barbed wire and saturation

troops with artillery and machine guns. However, in the Soviet-Polish war there was a completely different density of troops and, especially, firepower. There were no continuous lines of trenches, in most cases there was no barbed wire - a terrible enemy of the cavalry.

The Poles failed to defeat the 1st Cavalry, and Tukhachevsky, taking advantage of the weakening of the Polish forces in front of the Western Front, on July 4, having received significant reinforcements, including the 3rd Cavalry Corps of G.D. Guy, went on the offensive with the most decisive goals. The main blow was delivered on the right flank, which was supposed to pass along the borders of Lithuania and East Prussia. It was planned to encircle several Polish divisions in the area of Germanovichi - Luzhki - Glubokoe, while the main part of the enemy troops opposing the Western Front was driven into swampy Polesie. In memoirs

Tukhachevsky said:

"By the 7th, it became clear with complete certainty that the enemy troops had been completely defeated in the area of our main offensive."

The commander-in-chief of the "defeated" Polish troops, "First Marshal" Jozef Pilsudski, in his book "1920", written as a response to the "Campaign for the Vistula", regarded the results of the battle in Belarus differently. He stressed that Tukhachevsky's "sedan plan" had failed. The Poles escaped encirclement and retreated without heavy human losses, often not even having contact with the Soviet troops. On the other hand, they experienced a strong moral shock from the fact that it was not possible to hold or return, by means of counterattacks, positions that seemed to be sufficiently fortified. The experience of the world war dominated the Polish generals and soldiers, when trench lines covered with barbed wire were considered an almost impregnable obstacle capable of delaying the advance of enemy armies for many months. At the same time, they forgot that the density of battle formations, and especially artillery, on the Soviet-Polish front was several times less than, say, on the Russian-German front in 1915-1916, and even barbed wire was sorely lacking. Pilsudski commented on the incident in the following way:

"It was all the more difficult for a poor soldier to understand this great trench art, since all the knots of defense, cut-off positions and numbered lines were most often like twins, similar to each other, that is, they existed only on paper or were marked on the ground by some nondescript. When the time came to stop all these eccentricities, when all the work of a soldier for the sake of restoring the former position, probably extremely important for the high command, was wasted, the soldier, as usually happens in such cases, faced an alternative: either he and everyone simply incapable and powerless by his own efforts, and then the European spurs are not for him, or his commanders themselves do not know what they are doing. This was a moral shock for the soldier, from which it was difficult to recover ... "

Tukhachevsky, from the very beginning, approached the war with Poland as a war of maneuver, relying on the experience of his victories over the armies of Kolchak and Denikin. In the July offensive, he boldly concentrated two-thirds of the forces of the Western Front in a narrow sector of 90 kilometers and achieved success. On July 11, Tukhachevsky's troops occupied Minsk, on July 14 - Vilna, on July 15 - Molodechno, on the 19th Baranovichi and Grodno, and on the 23rd - Pinsk. armies

Polish North-Eastern Front retreated in disarray. The story of a refugee-landowner about what she experienced during the Polish retreat in Belarus has been preserved:

"When my daughter and I arrived in the city (Minsk. - B.S.), it was impossible to even think about getting on the train. During the night, the railway workers ruined 25 steam locomotives, and the gendarmerie and police officers sent to pacify and protect the rolling stock refused to obey, the soldiers kicked out the public from the stations, robbed and killed the population and set fire to the city ... We were picked up by the last retreating military unit ... We rode among the robberies, beatings and fires caused by the retreating Polish army. All the places on our way were burning. We had to travel 28 miles through dense forest: a rumor spread that the Bolsheviks had set up ambushes in the forest in order to intercept our

convoys. The Poles, mad with fear, sprinkled some kind of combustible powder on both sides of the road, arranged solid curtains of fire. Huge pine trees blazed and crackled, shells exploded falling into the fire, we choked, burned our cheeks and hands, and the horses side, but it was impossible to stop or move somewhere; lagging carts rushed to the mercy of fate, for any delay could threaten disaster, the Bolsheviks followed on their heels and surrounded the forest.

Here, not only the panicked retreat of Pilsudski's troops was recorded, but also the use of the "scorched earth" tactics by the Poles. Tukhachevsky writes that the enemy thoroughly destroyed communication lines, as well as buildings that could be used for military purposes, seeing this as one of the reasons for the failure near Warsaw: due to the paralysis of the railways, the Western Front did not receive enough ammunition, food, equipment and human replacements. The then Soviet commander-in-chief Kamenev also noted this:

"The Belopolsk command, with exceptional cruelty, to the point of senselessness, destroyed its rear during the retreat, especially railway tracks and track structures ... In general, it must be done justice that in terms of destruction, the Belopolsk command surpassed our opponents of the civil period of the war many times."

But one should not exaggerate the importance of damaging the railways for the development of the Soviet offensive. Tukhachevsky energetically engaged in the restoration of what was destroyed and achieved serious success here. Pilsudski wrote about this:

"I would like to note the thorough and energetic preparations made for the fastest possible establishment of rail transportation following the advancing troops. The energy that Mr. Tukhachevsky showed in this matter amazed me throughout the entire operation in July-August 1920. Suffice it to say that after of my victory near Warsaw, I found in Malkin - a station 80 km away from Warsaw - wagons for broad gauge, left behind during the hasty retreat of the enemy. Such progress in the repair and commissioning of the railway, with all the destruction that we left on it, is one of the greatest virtues of our adversary. And all this is largely due to the energy and foresight of Mr. Tukhachevsky."

So the complaints of the former commander of the Western Front himself and other Soviet authors about almost insurmountable difficulties

supplies during the Warsaw operation seem, to put it mildly, somewhat exaggerated.

The capture of Warsaw, the crushing of Poland as a prologue to the world proletarian revolution was seen by Tukhachevsky as a great deed, only slightly inferior in significance to the October Revolution. Even before the start of the July operation, he issued a famous order directing the soldiers and commanders of the Western Front to crush "White Poland", to the last decisive offensive against the Polish capital coming in the near future:

"Fighters of the workers' revolution! Fix your eyes on the West. The fate of the world revolution is being decided in the West. Through the corpse of white Poland lies the path to the world fire. On bayonets we will bring happiness and peace to working mankind. To the West! .. To Vilna, Minsk, Warsaw - march !"

Three years later, Tukhachevsky reflected on why a brilliantly launched offensive ended in disaster:

"The main reasons for the death of the operation can be recognized as an insufficiently serious attitude to the issues of preparing command and control troops. Technical means were available in insufficient quantities, largely due to the fact that they were not given due attention. Further, the unpreparedness of some of our top commanders made it impossible to correct technical shortcomings on the ground. The divergence at the time of the decisive clash almost at right angles between the main forces of the Western and Southwestern fronts predetermined the failure of the operation just at the moment when the Western Front was launched on the offensive beyond the Vistula. The absurd actions of the 4th Army wrested victory from our hands and ultimately led to our catastrophe."

The former commander of the Western Front also used such a traditional argument of all the beaten commanders as the alleged overwhelming superiority of the enemy in the number of troops. Tukhachevsky assured his readers and listeners that the Western Front at the final stage of the operation had no more than 40 thousand bayonets and sabers, while the Polish troops opposing it had more than 70 thousand bayonets and sabers.

How did events actually develop and why did Tukhachevsky's armies for the first and last time in his life were defeated? The idea of the actual Warsaw operation was, as always with Tukhachevsky, brilliant. One of the closest employees of the martial in the post-war years, brigade commander G.S. Isserson, who was lucky enough to survive in the Gulag, recalled how in 1936, during a trip to Paris, the head of the French Military Academy told him:

"You also have a great strategist - Tukhachevsky. His roundabout maneuver around Warsaw impresses."

The commander of the Western Front decided to take the Polish capital by a deep detour from the north. He mistakenly believed that the main forces of the Polish army were withdrawing in this direction. In addition, the offensive in the north brought the Red Army to the Danzig corridor and the borders of East Prussia. This cut off the main supply line for Poland with military materials from France and

England through the port of Danzig (Gdansk) and there was a real chance to bring the revolution to Germany on bayonets. Tukhachevsky in his "Campaign for the Vistula" devoted a special chapter to the export of the revolution "Revolution from outside". He claimed:

"The situation in Poland ... was portrayed in a light favorable to the revolution. The strong proletarian movement and the no less formidable movement of farm laborers put the Polish bourgeoisie in a very difficult position. Many Polish communists believed that as soon as we reached the ethnographic Polish border, the proletarian revolution in Poland will become inevitable and secure. Indeed, when we occupied the Bialystok region, we met there with the warmest sympathy and support of the working population. At mass meetings, resolutions were passed on joining the Red Army (Tukhachevsky did not take into account that in Bialystok itself, that is, among the local workers, it was not the Poles that sharply prevailed, but the Jews, who were sympathetic to the revolution and the Red Army; however, by their behavior it was in no way possible to judge

the mood of the Polish workers. - B.S.). The peasantry at first treated us suspiciously under the influence of the agitation of the priests and the gentry, but very soon got used to us and calmed down. The peasant population definitely sympathized with us. Thus, what we saw in the part of Poland occupied by us, of course, sympathized with the socialist offensive and was ready to accept it ... "

Even after suffering a defeat near Warsaw, Tukhachevsky refused to believe that the national consciousness of the majority of Polish workers and peasants rejected the ideas of the communist revolution, and the Red Army and Soviet Russia from the very beginning of the war were perceived by the bulk of the Poles as the heirs of the tsarist army and the Russian Empire. The beaten commander tried to prove that only the defeat of the Reds in the Battle of Warsaw contributed to the spread of the opinion that the Poles had a predominance of national feeling over class feeling, while in the event of a victory for the Soviet troops, everything would be the other way around:

"Talks about the awakened national feeling among the Polish working class in connection with our offensive are, of course, the result of our losing the campaign. Fear has big eyes. We must not forget that when we approach Warsaw, the working population of Prague (the Warsaw suburb. B.S.), Żódź and other workers' centers were dumbly worried, but were crushed by the bourgeois Polish volunteer units. The expectation of a revolution in Poland, as a meeting of our offensive, as a result of the defeat of the coercive instrument in the hands of the Polish bourgeoisie, had serious grounds, and, if it were not for our defeat, he would have been crowned with complete success."

But on this point, too, Pilsudski refuted Tukhachevsky. The Polish marshal remarked sarcastically:

"Mr. Tukhachevsky led his troops to the Vistula and beyond the Vistula in the name and for the sake of planting with the help of force what he calls revolution. In accordance with this, he also chose the title of the chapter - "Revolution from outside". But the goal of the war, outlined in such words, already in itself clearly shows that the internal revolution did not exist in our country if it had to be brought from outside on the edge of bayonets. In any case, the fact is beyond doubt ... that Soviet Russia waged war on us under the slogan of imposing on us, to the Poles, her own, i.e., the Soviet system, and she called such a goal a "revolution from outside." What the Soviets pursued

I was well aware of such a goal in the war from the very beginning, so I immediately want to note that I personally fought so that this revolution would not be brought to us from the outside on Soviet bayonets.

And continued:

"Mr. Tukhachevsky does not want to see that during the entire war that the Soviets have been waging with us, in the rear, and still more in the deep rear of the front turned against us, other Soviet troops and other brothers of Mr. Tukhachevsky have not been engaged in anything else as soon as with difficulty they suppressed one or another uprising against the Soviets! And most of the army of Mr. Tukhachevsky started a war with us only after they suppressed various uprisings somewhere in the depths of Soviet Russia. There was nothing like this in Poland. And troops, if they were assembled, could freely be sent to fight those who stand in front of the front, and not those who are behind it! During the whole war, only in a few places I was forced to send small detachments, and even then not for combat, but for conducting mass searches and seizure of weapons, which

I could be threatened. I remember how to one high representative of one of the Western states, who ... like Mr. Tukhachevsky, expected that something should "seeth" and "gurgel", I showed how in my rear the railways and telegraphs work without any protection. Maybe Mr. Tukhachevsky will see in this, as in other places, the underdevelopment of the "revolution", and vice versa, in the uprisings, which he himself fought in the rear of his front, an excess of counter-revolution. In the military strategy and calculations, these words do not change anything. The facts show that Mr. Tukhachevsky was mistaken in his calculations, but I had no mistake either in my heart or in my thoughts ... In achieving my goal - to leave as wide a space as possible between Warsaw and the Soviets - I acted as a person who knows theater of war like the back of your hand; everyone here took me for his own, and not for someone else, and spoke to me in a language that was completely understandable to me. And I clearly saw that the vast majority of the population treated the Soviets and their rule with deep distrust, and often with obvious hostility, seeing in them - justified or unfounded, it also does not matter for the strategy, rampant unbearable terror, which was called Jewish. Therefore, throughout the war, I did not feel anxiety for my rear, that some kind of uprising might break out there.

Very ironically, though already after the fact, the idea of a proletarian revolution in Poland, which should help the Red Army in its advance to the West, was treated by Commander-in-Chief Kamenev, who wrote about the last days of the Warsaw battle in 1922 in the article "Fight against White Poland":

"Now the moment has come when the working class of Poland could really provide the Red Army with the help that would give Workers 'and Peasants' Russia a secured peace without the threat of new attacks; but the outstretched hand of the proletariat did not turn out. Probably, the more powerful hands of the Polish bourgeoisie this hand something deeply, deeply hidden."

Tukhachevsky, in his "Campaign for the Vistula", drew bright prospects not only for the Polish, but also for the German revolution:

"The workers of Germany openly opposed the Entente, drove back the trains with equipment and weapons, which

France sent to Poland, did not allow the unloading of French and British ships with ammunition and weapons in Danzig, derailed trains and so on - in a word, they waged an active revolutionary struggle in favor of Soviet Russia. From East Prussia, when we came into contact with it, hundreds and thousands of volunteers, Spartacists, non-party workers flowed to us under the banner of the Red Army, forming into the German Rifle Brigade ... So, Germany was revolutionary bubbling and for the final outbreak was only waiting for contact with the armed stream revolution."

And made an unconditional conclusion:

"A revolution from outside was possible. Capitalist Europe was shaken to its foundations, and if not for our strategic mistakes, not for our military defeat, then perhaps the Polish campaign would have been a link between the October revolution and the West European revolution" (in the last phrase Tukhachevsky quite original combined space and time, Western Europe with October).

Worried about the Soviet offensive, on July 11, the British government, signed by Foreign Minister Lord George Curzon, sent a note to Moscow with a proposal to immediately conclude a truce and recognize as the eastern border of Poland the line drawn up at the end of 1919 by the Supreme Council of the Entente. This line, which basically coincides with the current border of Poland with Ukraine and Belarus, has since become known as the Curzon Line. On July 16, the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks recognized the need to continue the offensive until Poland itself requests a truce. At the same time, crossing the Curzon line was not ruled out if the need arose. On July 17, People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs G. V. Chicherin replied with a note that Soviet Russia was ready for peace, but that England's mediation in achieving it was unacceptable, since London, in the event of a resumption of the Red Army offensive, promised Poland help and, therefore, could not be considered neutral in the Soviet Union. Polish conflict. On July 22, the Polish government and the General Staff proposed to conclude a truce and start peace negotiations. The Polish delegation has arrived.

The commander of the Western Front was a categorical opponent of the stop proposed by some military experts approximately on the Curzon line - on the Western Bug, where Soviet troops reached by the end of July, taking the city and fortress of Brest-Litovsk on August 1. Tukhachevsky insisted in 1923:

"According to the testimony of the French and Polish officers, the military units lost all combat stability. The Polish rear was teeming with deserters. There was no hope of salvation. to replenish, strengthen their rear, put in order the entire body of the advancing armies, then, of course, there were much more opportunities for the Poles in this sense. We must not forget that the existence of the capitalist world was at stake not only in Poland, but throughout Europe. transports and echelons with ammunition and weapons were sent to the aid of the Polish army from France and England.

who took care of unloading and loading the necessary equipment. Polish capital exerted all its strength, developing a frenzied agitation against the Bolshevik offensive. The priests served him to the fullest and called on the Polish population to national self-defense. The formation of bourgeois volunteer units was very successful. And if only we let the Poles carry out this work in peace, then in two or three weeks, which we need to organize our affairs, we would encounter armies much stronger than ours and would again have to put our strategic future at stake. With the shock to which the Polish army was subjected, we had the right and had to continue our offensive. The task was difficult, bold, complex, but world problems are not solved by timid tasks.

The 27-year-old front commander dreamed of solving the main, as it seemed to him, the question of our time with his victorious march on Warsaw - to ensure the triumph of the world proletarian revolution.

And, at first glance, his arguments in favor of continuing the offensive seem convincing. But only if you do not pay attention to the obvious contradictions in the text of the "Campaign for the Vistula". Indeed, in another place, as we remember, Tukhachevsky claimed that the German workers had successfully sabotaged military supplies to Poland and were impatiently waiting for the Red Army to finally bring the revolution to Germany on their bayonets. The Polish workers and peasants, on the other hand, allegedly did nothing but awe their own bourgeoisie and prepared to join the ranks of the Polish Red Army, which "began to take shape at an accelerated pace", but the trouble was, it did not have time to turn into something tangible by the time the Soviet troops were defeated. troops. And suddenly it turns out that the Entente, it turns out, does not experience, despite German sabotage, any special difficulties in supplying Pilsudski with everything necessary, and the Polish bourgeoisie successfully and in a short time creates numerous volunteer units - really from students and merchants alone, as Soviet propaganda assured ?

The solution here, I think, is quite simple. In those chapters of the book where Tukhachevsky needed to justify HIS rather adventurous plan of attack on Warsaw, he emphasized the weakness and demoralization of the Polish bourgeoisie and army and the strength and enthusiasm of the Polish proletariat and laborers. When the commander of the Western Front needed to explain the catastrophe by objective conditions beyond his control, the theses about the numerous Polish reserves and the ability of the bourgeoisie to crush the "nascent" Polish revolution were used.

How did Tukhachevsky really assess the situation on the eve and in the days of the Warsaw battle? Most likely, then he was sure that the enemy was defeated and retreating in panic, which creates favorable conditions for the Polish revolution, which, in turn, will help the Red Army to complete the defeat of Pilsudski's troops. Only on the basis of such a scenario of the development of events can one explain the actions actually taken by Tukhachevsky to prepare and conduct the Warsaw operation. And, as we have already seen, there were actually cases of panic and disorderly retreat among the Poles, attempts to form units of the Polish Red Army were made. However, the scale of these phenomena in intelligence reports and lower-level commanders, as usual, was greatly exaggerated. Affected by a long time

ailment of the Russian army, noted by the critically thinking Baron Budberg:

"Love for inflated and false reports is our old disease, received in the Caucasus (it manifested itself especially clearly today during the Chechen - the last Caucasian war. - B.S.) and in Turkestan, which developed widely during the boxer uprising (in China in 1899-1901, suppressed by the troops of Russia, Germany, the USA, Japan and other great powers. - B.S.) and the Japanese war (when many military careers and many heroic reputations were created on this) and blossomed into a great war. Now this abomination is practiced with might and main; almost everyone lies and fabricates reports; the nearest authorities know this, but turn a blind eye and go along the same path themselves; the demand for victories, successes, trophies and overcomings is huge at the top, and the material of their own manufacture sent there willingly and uncontrollably

taken on faith and richly rewarded; few have refrained from dabbling in this source of rewards and promotions; There are, of course, exceptions, but they are out of the question and very out of fashion.

The same phenomenon was noticed in the Red Army by Trotsky, who even issued a special order:

".. Do not write false information about fierce battles where there was a cruel panic. Punish for untruth, as for treason. Military affairs make mistakes, but not lies, deceit and self-deception."

Budberg himself, a lieutenant general from the tsarist time, who had rich military experience (in the First World War he commanded a corps and was the quartermaster general of the army headquarters), learned well, like his opponent, the chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council, to distinguish falsehood in the reports that came to him. If, for example, it is reported that the enemy is retreating in a panic, but nothing is reported about the captured artillery pieces and prisoners, then, not without reason, the baron believed, the enemy's defeat was "somewhat exaggerated." Tukhachevsky did not have the experience of an old General Staff officer. In World War I, they did not command a company. And later, during the struggle with Kolchak and Denikin, he was more than once convinced that the optimistic reports of his subordinates were generally true: prisoners and trophies were available, the white armies retreated, quickly melting from desertion. Tukhachevsky thought that the same picture would be on the Polish front. After all, the Polish workers and peasants mobilized by Pilsudski, the lieutenant-communist believed, did not fundamentally differ from their Russian class brothers, who went over to the side of the Red Army in masses, as soon as the latter inflicted several sensitive blows on the troops of the white generals. Therefore, the rosy reports of the army commanders and divisional commanders about the defeat of the "White Poles" were uncritically perceived by the young commander of the Western Front. It was self-deception. We can agree with the commander of the 1st Cavalry S. M. Budyonny:

"From the operational reports of the Western Front, we saw that the Polish troops, retreating, did not suffer heavy losses. It seemed that the enemy was retreating in front of the armies of the Western Front, saving forces for decisive battles ... I think that M. N. Tukhachevsky in the excessive optimism of the member of the RVS of the Western Front, Smilga, and the chief of staff of the front, Schwartz, greatly influenced the first of them, who convinced that the fate of Warsaw was already a foregone conclusion, and the second presented ...

information about the superiority of the forces of the Western Front over the enemy by one and a half times.

Well, it's hard to judge whether they're wrong or not. It is a painfully delicate question in all wars, not excluding the Soviet-Polish one, about the balance of forces and the losses of the parties. We will touch on it again. But that Tukhachevsky and the Revolutionary Military Council of the Western Front greatly exaggerated the capabilities of their troops and seriously underestimated the enemy - doubts does not call.

Trotsky was the only one of the major leaders on the Soviet side who from the very beginning did not believe in the "revolutionization" of Poland with the help of Red Army bayonets. As chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council and People's Commissar for Military and Naval Affairs, he better than anyone else imagined the real state of the Red Army, so to speak, "from the inside." Later, in the 1920s, Lev Davidovich, objecting to

the orientation of the Soviet armed forces towards an offensive doctrine and the "export of revolution", wrote:

"Well, how will you say to a Saratov peasant: either we will take you to Belgium to overthrow the bourgeoisie, or you will defend the Saratov province from the Anglo-French landing in Odessa or Arkhangelsk? into the soul of a man.

Trotsky understood this already in the spring and summer of the 20th, during the war with Poland. The chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council felt that the Saratov, Penza, Siberian and other peasants were already very tired of the massacre that had been going on for the sixth year. It is still possible, albeit with great difficulty, with a carrot and a stick, to force them to defend the borders of the former Russian Empire from the Polish offensive (some of the Ukrainian and Belarusian peasants, whose lands were occupied by the Poles, even did this with some enthusiasm). However, to force the peasant masses, who constituted the overwhelming majority of the Red Army soldiers, to overthrow the "foreign" Polish bourgeoisie in Warsaw seemed to Trotsky impossible. Lev Davidovich knew perfectly well that more and more peasants were leaving for the forests to fight the food detachments that were raking out the last, and back in February 1920 he unsuccessfully proposed to the Central Committee that the apportionment that was strangling the peasant economy be replaced by a hard tax. Just in the days of the decisive battles near Warsaw, on August 15, the largest, Tambov, uprising began. Under such conditions, the campaign to Poland and further to the West seemed too risky to Trotsky. In his memoirs, he described his position as follows:

"We strove with all our might for peace, even at the cost of the largest concessions. Perhaps I did not want this war more than anyone else, because I imagined too clearly how difficult it would be for us to wage it after three years of continuous civil war ...

The country made another truly heroic effort. The capture of Kyiv by the Poles, devoid of any military meaning whatsoever, did us a great service: the country was shaken up. I again traveled to armies and cities, mobilizing people and resources. We returned Kyiv. Our progress has begun. The Poles rolled back with such speed, which I did not count on, since I did not allow the degree of frivolity that lay at the basis of Pilsudski's campaign. But on our side, along with the first major successes, an overestimation of

the opportunities that open before us. A mood began to take shape and grow stronger in favor of turning the war, which began as a defensive one, into an offensive revolutionary war. In principle, of course, I could not have any arguments against this. The question came down to the balance of power. An unknown quantity was the mood of the Polish workers and peasants. Some of the Polish comrades, as the late Yu. Markhlevsky, an associate of Rosa Luxemburg, assessed the situation very soberly. Markhlevsky's appraisal was an important element in my striving to get out of the war as soon as possible. But there were other voices as well. There were ardent hopes for an uprising of the Polish workers. In any case, Lenin developed a firm plan: to complete the matter, that is, to enter Warsaw in order to help the Polish working masses overthrow the Pilsudski government and seize power. The decision outlined in the government easily captured the imagination of the high command and the command of the Western Front.

By the time of my next visit to Moscow, I found in the center a very firm mood in favor of bringing the war "to the end." I strongly opposed this. The Poles have already asked for peace. I believed that we had reached the climax of our successes, and if, without calculating our strength, we go further, we can pass by an already won victory - to defeat. After the colossal tension that allowed the 4th Army to cover 650 kilometers in five weeks, it could move forward only by the force of inertia. Everything hung on the nerves, and these are too thin threads. One strong push was enough to shake our front and turn a completely unheard of and unparalleled - even Foch was forced to admit - offensive impulse into a catastrophic retreat. I demanded an immediate and speedy conclusion of peace, until the army finally ran out of steam. I was supported, I remember, only by Rykov. Lenin conquered the rest in my absence. It was decided to attack.

If then, in early August, the Soviet side had shown readiness to make peace with the Piłsudski government, then, quite likely, they would have been able to achieve recognition of the Curzon Line as the Polish eastern border. However, the Red Army received an order: forward to the West! On July 19, Tukhachevsky proposed to Commander-in-Chief Kamenev

"consider a Cavalry attack in a southwestern direction in order to pass fortifications in an area poorly occupied by the enemy, and win the flank of the Poles like Guy's Cavalry Corps."

By that time, Kamenev himself had come to the conclusion that it was expedient for the troops of the Southwestern Front to act in this direction, which he reported in his reply to Tukhachevsky. On July 22, the commander of the Southwestern Front, A.I. Egorov, and members of the Revolutionary Military Council, I.V. Stalin and R.I. Berzin, sent a telegram to the commander-in-chief proposing to change the direction of the main attack of their subordinate troops from Lublin to Lvov. This strategic decision was motivated by the fact that "the Poles are putting up very stubborn resistance, with particular stubbornness in the Lvov direction," and that "the situation with Romania remains indefinitely tense." The next day, the Revolutionary Military Council approved the proposal of Yegorov, Stalin and Berzin.

Thus began the divergence of the Western and Southwestern fronts, which had previously been concentrically advancing on the Polish capital. The Soviet command clearly underestimated the enemy. I wanted to capture not only Warsaw, but also Lviv, and at the same time with the "Romanian boyars"

figure out. To revolutionize - so the whole of Europe, and not just Poland. Lenin and Kamenev, Tukhachevsky and Yegorov, Smilga and Stalin thought that the Red Army would have enough strength for everything. After parts of Guy's cavalry corps occupied the fortress of Grodno on July 19 from a raid, commander-in-chief Kamenev issued a directive to take Warsaw by August 12. The main blow was delivered by the northern wing of the Western Front in order to cut the Danzig corridor as soon as possible, blocking the path of Anglo-French aid to Poland. Kamenev and Tukhachevsky, logically arguing, believed that the Polish command perfectly understood the importance of Danzig (Gdansk) for supplying its army with everything necessary and would spare no effort to protect the northern transport artery, so that the most powerful grouping of Polish troops would be concentrated here. Its defeat will predetermine the fate of Warsaw.

In fact, the main part of the Polish troops at that moment was

concentrated against the Southwestern Front, where it unsuccessfully tried to defeat Budyonny's cavalry. Their transfer to the north was fraught with many difficulties. Transport was upset by the war, and the troops themselves did not have experience in complex regroupings.

Therefore, Pilsudski planned, in order to reduce troop movements to a minimum, to concentrate the most combat-ready divisions from Ukraine to strike from the south into the flank of the Soviet Western Front. He wrote:

"My overall strategic intent was:

- 1) The northern front should only gain time;
- 2) to carry out energetic training of reserves in the country - I sent them to the Bug, without getting involved in the battles of the Northern Front;
- 3) put an end to Budyonny and transfer large forces from the south for the counteroffensive that I was planning from the Brest area.

I adhered to this basic plan to the very end ... I became even stronger in my opinion when I saw all the futility of attempts to change the absurd strategic formation of our troops on the Northern Front.

The Poles did not succeed in "putting an end to Budyonny". But in the area of Brody Cavalry in early August was defeated. However, the fall of Brest forced the Polish command to abandon the counterattack on the Bug and withdraw troops beyond the Vistula.

It turned out that both sides took the main decisions during the battle for Warsaw almost simultaneously - Pilsudski on August 6, and Tukhachevsky on August 8. Kamenev recalled:

"Naturally, our command was faced with the question in all its magnitude: is it feasible to immediately solve the upcoming task for the Red Army in its composition and state in which it approached the Bug, and whether the rear will cope ... This has to be answered: and yes, and no. If we were right in taking into account the political moment, if we did not overestimate the depth of the defeat of the Belopolsky army, and if the exhaustion of the Red Army was not excessive, then the task should have been started immediately. Otherwise, the operation, quite possibly, would have to be abandoned at all, since it would be too late to lend a helping hand

to the proletariat of Poland and finally render harmless the force that carried out the treacherous attack on us. After repeatedly checking all the above information, it was decided to continue the operation without stopping.

In fact, Trotsky alone was in favor of the only reasonable decision under those conditions to "abdicate completely" from the attack on Warsaw, stop on the Western Bug and seek peace. But his voice was not heard. The Central Committee decided to attack. Tukhachevsky demanded the unification under his command of both fronts operating against Polysha after reaching the Bug and occupying Brest-Litovsk. Later, it was precisely the delay of such a union that he explained the failure near Warsaw. However, in his memoirs, he actually admitted that he was not able to control the troops of the Southwestern Front, since he did not have communications:

The swampy Polesye did not allow direct interaction between the Western Front and the Southwestern Front... When... we tried to carry out unification, it turned out that it was almost impossible due to the complete absence of communications. The Western Front could not establish the latter with the South-Western. We, in the presence of those

the unfortunate means that were at our disposal could not complete this task soon, not earlier than August 13-14, and since the end of July the situation insistently demanded the immediate unification of all these troops under a common command ... the subordination of the 12th and 1st Cavalry Army, the command of the Western Front had already predetermined for them to pull up to the left flank of the main armies of the front, but the matter was delayed, and this task remained hanging in the air.

Tukhachevsky's calculations turned out to be built on sand. On August 2, the Politburo decided to unite the troops of the two fronts under his command. However, the transfer to the Western Front of the 1st Cavalry and 12th Army was not immediately possible. On August 8, Tukhachevsky proposed to the headquarters of the Southwestern Front to create a temporary operational center to control these armies, since "the situation requires an urgent unification of the armies, and we do not have the means to quickly establish comprehensive communication with them." Egorov and Stalin did not object, but believed that the operational point should be created by the forces and means of the Western Front, so as not to split up the headquarters

South-Western, who was to lead the troops operating against Wrangel. "Any other solution to the problem," they argued, "we consider

harmful to the cause in general, in particular to achieve success over Wrangel. " Here, the local interests of the leadership of the Southwestern Front, who did not want to complicate their lives when organizing operations against Wrangel, manifested themselves. In addition, Yegorov and Stalin hoped that Lvov was about to fall, and hoped to reap the glory of the conquerors of the capital of Eastern Galicia. Most importantly, euphoria still reigned in connection with the defeat of the "White Poles", which seemed to have already taken place.

They thought that at the same time it was possible to destroy the last of the white armies, the Russian army of Baron P. A. Wrangel. At the same time, as if

it was forgotten that the Polish front remained the main theater of the war, and the Wrangel army that escaped from the Crimea, despite the capture of Northern Tavia, still could not threaten the rear of the Soviet troops advancing on Warsaw and Lvov.

Only on August 11 was an agreement reached on the turn of the 12th and 1st Cavalry armies to Warsaw. On this day, the commander-in-chief ordered the Cavalry to be taken to the reserve, and the 12th to be redirected to Lublin. However, during the transfer of directives, the cipher was distorted, and the leadership of the Southwestern Front was able to get acquainted with them only on August 13. And the day before, they had already thrown the 1st Cavalry to the "last decisive" assault on Lvov, although they no longer had the right to do so. Budyonny's cavalry, by order of the commander-in-chief, was in reserve and could be brought into battle only with his consent. Stalin and Yegorov hoped to quickly take Lvov, and then send troops to help the Western Front or even, as Stalin suggested, immediately to the Crimean sector of the front, if everything was already over near Warsaw. Tukhachevsky, meanwhile, demanded the immediate transfer of both armies to him. The Commander-in-Chief issued the corresponding directive, demanding the transfer of the armies by noon on August 14th. The Revolutionary Military Council of the Southwestern Front objected that the Cavalry and the 12th Army were already involved in the battles for Lvov and it was not possible to immediately move them north. In fact, as Budyonny claims in his memoirs, at that moment the Cavalry was still advancing towards Lvov and

started fighting with the rearguards of the enemy. It could still be turned to Grubeshov and Zamostye to assist Tukhachevsky's troops. However, Yegorov and Stalin stubbornly continued to drive the cavalry to Lvov.

Meanwhile, Tukhachevsky continued to make a deep detour of the Polish capital from the north. On August 8, he gave the order to cross the Vistula on the 14th. Four armies are advancing north of Warsaw - the 3rd, 4th, 15th and 16th. Together with them, Guy's 3rd cavalry corps broke forward, threatening the Polish rear and, like the Budyonnovsk Cavalry, forcing the Poles to rapidly roll back. South of the Polish capital, only the weak Mozyr group of T. S. Khvesin advances. Tukhachevsky reinforced it with the 58th division from the 12th army. He feels some kind of vague anxiety about his left flank, exposed due to the lagging behind of the Southwestern Front. But there is no concrete data on the concentration of forces here by the Poles for a counterattack. And this concentration is already unfolding with might and main.

Meanwhile, Lenin hurried Tukhachevsky with the occupation of Warsaw and access to Danzig. The Soviet leader bombarded Trotsky's deputy, E. M. Sklyansky, with notes after the start of the Polish counteroffensive (0 which Moscow still does not know):

"If from a military point of view it is possible (we will beat Wrangel without it), then from a political point of view it is paramount to finish off Poland ...";

"We must press: by all means take Warsaw in 3-5 days ...";

"The Germans write that the Red Army is close to Graudenz. Isn't it possible to lie there and completely cut off Poland from Danzig?"

Ilyich sees a simple way to get by near Warsaw even without the Cavalry: point out to the leadership of the Western Front

"without exception (after harvesting bread) to take into the army all adult men";

"To mobilize Belarusian peasants without exception. Then the Poles will be stirred up without Budyonny ...".

But it didn't work out.

It is well known that victory has many fathers, and defeat is always an orphan. After the war, there were long disputes in Poland, who was the first to propose the idea of a counteroffensive from the line of the Vepsh River to the flank of Tukhachevsky's armies. There were three main contenders. This is, first of all, the Polish commander-in-chief "First Marshal" Józef Piłsudski, in the words of Mark Addanov, the new Pan Volodyevsky, who "as if plucked from the pages of Sienkiewicz's historical novels", "the last Pan Volodyevsky ... who has entered an era when the Volodyevskys have nothing do". This is the chief of the Polish General Staff, General Tadeusz Rozwadowski, Piłsudski's future political opponent. This, finally, is the French General Maxime Weygand, who in those days was an adviser to the Anglo-French military mission in Poland. By the way, the last two could not stand each other and communicated through notes or through Piłsudski. An objective study of documents and memoirs published after the war shows that the main role in the success of the Polish counter-offensive near Warsaw was nevertheless played by the "First Marshal". Weygand proposed to deliver the main blow in the north in order to protect Danzig, limiting himself to an auxiliary offensive against Tukhachevsky's left flank. He believed that for the sake of success near Warsaw, Eastern Galicia and Lvov could be sacrificed. Piłsudski insisted that there should be only an auxiliary strike in the north. Marshal decided to carry out the main offensive

with Vepsha, into the gap between the Western and Southwestern fronts. Rozvadovsky, ex officio, developed specific battle plans, which is why all the directives for the Warsaw operation were signed by him. However, its idea belonged to Piłsudski. Rozvadovsky proposed to deliver the main blow from the Gura-Kalvaria region near Warsaw. The commander-in-chief, however, settled on a more risky offensive from the area of the Vepsh River, which would guarantee a deeper bypass of the enemy.

On August 6, the Polish high command issued the famous "order to regroup", which is considered the beginning of the Warsaw operation. The northeastern Polish front was supposed to be withdrawn to the Vistula. At the same time, it was decided "to accept a general battle near Warsaw." The Polish plan, according to this directive, was as follows:

"1) tie the enemy in the south, covering Lvov and the oil basin (Drohobych area. - B.S.);

2) prevent a detour in the north along the German border and weaken the enemy's scope by bloodily repulsing his expected attacks on the Warsaw tete-de-pon (bridgehead on the right bank of the Vistula. - B.S.);

3) for the center - an offensive task: to quickly concentrate a maneuverable army on the lower Vepsha with the task of hitting the rear and flanks of the enemy advancing on Warsaw and defeating him; a group of troops on the upper Vepsha, assembled to cover the concentration of the mobile army from the east and southeast, will assist the mobile army in the northeast direction.

From the Polish South-Eastern Front to the north, the 18th division was transferred to the newly formed 5th Army, recapturing Brody from Budyonny's cavalry. This army, under the command of General Vladislav Sikorsky, the future head of the Polish government in exile in London, went on the offensive on August 14 and pressed the 15th Soviet army. Thanks to this, Tukhachevsky was even more convinced that the main Polish forces were concentrated in the north, and continued to carry out his plan. Guy's Cavalry Corps crossed the Vistula on August 16 and occupied Vlotslavsk. Divisions of the 3rd Army invaded the Danzig Corridor and by August 18 occupied Soldau and Strasbourg. Thus, the Soviet troops finally managed to cut the main transport artery, along which French aid went to Poland. But it was already too late. The Polish strike force, called the Middle Front, completed its concentration on Vepsha and proceeded to decisive action.

Pilsudski personally led the troops of the Middle Front. He explained his decision this way:

"I remembered well that most of my forces gathered in Warsaw came to the capital after a series of defeats and setbacks. Reducing the number of troops in the city, withdrawing at least a few units from it seemed unsafe to me. ten divisions, almost half of the Polish army, doomed to passive inactivity? That's the question I asked myself... Any option rested on a lack of strength, showing the whole pointlessness of the struggle or increasing to incredible proportions the risk before which logic gave in. Everything was presented in black color, evoked hopelessness and melancholy ... A counterattack, no matter how much strength it will be

carried out, must be controlled by one commander ... The most difficult task fell to the lot of the one who, being the weakest, had to show strength and, contrary to common sense, decide the outcome of the battle. I decided from the very beginning that I could not demand from any of my subordinates that he put this absurdity on his shoulders, and if I, as the supreme commander, lay this absurdity at the basis of my decision, then I must take upon myself and doing the most absurd part of it. Therefore, I firmly established myself in the idea that the counterattack group - no matter how strong or weak - I would personally command. I was led to this idea by the unwillingness during the decisive operation to be under the pressure of our wise cowards and alarmists.

Having compared all the possible options several times, I determined two things for myself: to withdraw the main forces of our 4th Army to the south, risking creating cover from the south, and to withdraw from its composition two divisions that I considered the best - the 1st and 3rd th legionnaires. Then I finally decided that I would lead the counterattack myself, although I was aware that by doing so I could mess up the administration, since I took direct command of only a small part of those troops for which I remained the supreme commander.

General Rozvadovsky on August 6 proposed to concentrate the 4th Army in the Garvolin area and strike north against the Soviet group attacking Warsaw. Piysudski considered this option too risky: the superior forces of the Western Front could easily throw General Sikorski's army into the Vistula (there were no bridges or crossings in that area). Marshal ordered her to withdraw to the south, and two divisions

transfer legionnaires from the Southern Front to reinforce the counterattack grouping. The 6th Polish Army was ordered to retreat to Lvov. Pilsudski also provided for measures in case the Cavalry tried to come to the aid of Tukhachevsky:

"If Budyonny moves north, then all of our cavalry and the best infantry division should immediately follow him and interfere with his advance by any means. Deblin. Thus, bridges and crossings both across the Vistula and across the Wiepsz were covered.

On August 13, Piłsudski took command of the Middle Front and arrived at his headquarters in Puławy on the right bank of the Vistula. The Polish "supreme leader" had to face off against the winner of the Russian "supreme ruler". Perhaps, for the only time in the entire civil war, Tukhachevsky had against him a commander worthy of his talent, and troops that differed significantly in morale from hastily, literally from the stick recruited by the white armies of Kolchak and Denikin. Unlike the Polish commander-in-chief, the commander of the Western Front chose to follow the decisive events near Warsaw from afar, all the while remaining at the front headquarters in Minsk. Maybe it was a mistake. It is possible that in place Tukhachevsky would still be able to see the impending danger, and if not prevent the catastrophe, then reduce its size. However, only from Minsk did he have a more or less reliable connection with all subordinate armies, and there were no guarantees that when moving to the west it would be possible to maintain it at least at the same level. So, who knows, it wouldn't even be worse if Tukhachevsky, before the start of the offensive on

I decided to move to Warsaw, say, to Brest, to the headquarters of the Mozyr group.

Then, after the war, Tukhachevsky explained his defeat by the numerical superiority of the enemy and the failure of the command of the Southwestern Front to comply with the commander-in-chief's order to transfer the 1st Cavalry Army near Warsaw. Well, about the numerical superiority, he is certainly not original. At all times and among all peoples, the losers tried to attribute their failures to the numerical superiority of the enemy, even when there was no such superiority at all. If you read, for example, the Soviet historiography of the Great Patriotic War, then you will get the strong impression that the Germans were superior to the Red Army in people and equipment until the 43rd year, and sometimes even in the 44th and almost in the 45th. As for the problem of turning the armies of the Southwestern Front to Warsaw, it was discussed in the Soviet Union from the beginning of the 20s until the beginning of the 90s, and, depending on the political situation, it was decided in favor of Stalin, Yegorov, Voroshilov and Budyonny, then in favor of Tukhachevsky and the Revolutionary Military Council of the Western Front. Let's see how things really were.

Mikhail Nikolaevich insisted:

"The Western Front had barely 40,000 infantry in its ranks. On the other hand, the Polish forces increased to more than 70,000, according to our intelligence data of that time, but in fact they were even more."

And in another place he repeated for persuasiveness:

"According to our calculations, the increased number of the enemy had ... up to 70,000 bayonets and sabers ... The forces of the Western Front did not exceed 40,000 bayonets and sabers."

Pilsudski frankly laughed at this arithmetic:

"The most amusing are the obviously biased calculations and results ... showing the balance of forces before the start of the main Soviet operation on July 4, which ended near Warsaw. on the Russian side, instead of bayonets and sabers, we find only three asterisks, which do not mean any number, but explain that battalions and squadrons are already included in the composition of divisions ... It is not known why in some of our infantry divisions what - it was a miracle that cavalry appeared in a constantly repeating number of 400 sabers, while other divisions were not blessed with such a gift ... Such a strange calculation of the ratio of our and Soviet forces, full of gross errors, could be a very sad evidence of the poor work of Soviet headquarters in troops commanded by Mr. Tukhachevsky, if it were not for his obvious agitational and journalistic orientation ... expressed in the fact that in the final result, in the amount displayed at the bottom of the columns, tendentiously exaggerate our forces and, conversely, downplay our own.

Piysudski catches his former adversary on obvious contradictions:

"Mr. Tukhachevsky claims that over 30,000 quite reliable people were mobilized and poured into the ranks of the Red Army during the campaign from the Berezina and the Western Dvina to Warsaw, adding that this is a "characteristic brilliant example of class staffing." However, in calculations of the numerical there is no trace of a new replenishment of the armies.

Naturally, the question arises, where are these deliberate exaggerations of Mr. Tukhachevsky actually contained - in the digital data given in the tables and having a clearly agitational character, or in the journalistic praise of the energy of the Red Army workers and the system of class staffing of the army?

For his part, the Polish commander-in-chief, like Baron Budberg, already familiar to us, was very critical of the reports of his subordinates and called for similar healthy criticism to be applied to Soviet reports on the number of troops:

"The quantitative composition of our forces can be judged on the basis of reports periodically submitted by the commanders of various units. However, anyone who wants to rely only on these data, I, as a historian, must warn against this rash step. First of all, because any report, regardless on what information it contains, from a historical point of view, it can be considered a reliable source only after a critical analysis, because reports are written for superiors, they always have the goal of not only reporting on something, but also implicitly inclining the boss to certain thoughts. If this happens in armies that have deep traditions and a long time ago a system of personnel training worked out to the smallest detail, then what can we say about our army, most recently

formed and, if we are talking about commanders, consisting of people, in fact, randomly assembled from a wide variety of armies and schools. It is for this reason that I have never taken seriously enough the reports of our commanders on the strength of the troops. I always made one summary amendment to them, namely: in our army, the system of seconding many people from combat units to the near or far rear to perform work in the interests of the troops or commanders and for various economic needs (in the Red, and especially later in the Soviet Army, this system of "economic use" of soldiers, including for the construction of generals' dachas and weeding of commander's gardens, flourished. - B. S.). In the reports, these seconded were never or almost never indicated, and for the authorities they were considered permanently in the regiments. Our connivance in this respect has gone too far, and I do not recall even one case when one of the commanders applied strict disciplinary measures here. Therefore, always, when receiving reports on the size of the armies, I entered into the final report ... a total amendment ... - at least a third of the people who were considered bayonets and sabers, I did not count in the combat strength ...

I do not at all want to say that the Soviet army did not know such a system of economic detachment of bayonets and sabers. Moreover, I am sure that it was. Nevertheless ... the discipline of our enemy was extremely tough, often even cruel, and the measures taken to maintain it were so severe that, I think, the enemy commander did not need to make such sad calculations as I did.

Pilsudski admitted that he was very jealous of the commander of one of the Soviet divisions, who managed to increase its combat strength at the expense of the guards and rear teams. In the Polish army, remember this

the marshal could not. He showed how he counted the number of his troops and the wax of the enemy. According to the testimony of prisoners, the number of squadrons and companies was estimated, and on the basis of this - battalions, regiments and divisions. Another way was to determine the total number of those who could be put under arms, and then to establish the approximate percentage of those who could actually be sent into battle. This percentage, according to Pilsudski's calculations, for the Polish army was no more than 12-15. Piłsudski explained why this happened as follows:

"The unfavorable state of our military organization was the result of the extremely hasty and unorganized formation of our army, which we began only in 1918, and, moreover, practically from scratch (the Red Army was in absolutely the same position. - B.S.) ... Representatives of our the military administration avoided, as if it were some kind of sin, the application of strict disciplinary measures ... Such an obvious relaxation in relation to rear work led in the end to the fact that a huge part of the human material leaked between the administration's fingers. I always laughed that we did not we can get rid of the voluntary nature of the army, since only those who want to fight, or those who are fools, fight with us.

The Polish "supreme leader" believed that in the Red Army the percentage of fighters in relation to the total number of eaters, due to tougher disciplinary measures against deserters and evading participation in

combat, was significantly higher, and estimated it to 25 percent. Since there were about 795 thousand people in the Western Front in August 1920, for the period of the Warsaw battle Pilsudski estimated Tukhachevsky's forces at 130-150 thousand fighters, and the Polish troops opposing them at 120-180 thousand. Such an assessment seems closer to the truth than that contained in the "Campaign for the Vistula". Recall that the same Budberg complained during the period of heavy defeats of the Kolchak armies:

"Those who allowed the army to swell up to 800 thousand mouths with 70-80 thousand bayonets are to blame for the failure of the front ..."

It is absolutely unbelievable that during the victorious march on Warsaw the Red Army had such an insignificant share of bayonets and sabers as the army of Admiral Kolchak, which was defeated and rapidly decaying. In addition, after the Warsaw disaster, more than 80 thousand people from the Western Front were captured by the Polish, and more than 40 thousand were interned in East Prussia. Basically, these were those who in military jargon are called bayonets and sabers - after all, the rear managed to escape behind the Western Bug and escape. In addition, many fighters and commanders found death in battle, and some, albeit a small part of the combat units of the Western Front, managed to avoid death. How did over 100,000 prisoners and internees come about if, according to Tukhachevsky's assurances, his front had only 70,000 bayonets and cavalry? No, in all likelihood, in the Battle of Warsaw, the forces of the opponents were equal. It is even possible that Tukhachevsky had a slight numerical superiority, but it could not help him in any way. Piłsudski's plan was that the Polish strike group consistently smashed the Reds piecemeal, turning out to be stronger than the troops opposing it at any given moment: first the Mozyr group, and then the divisions of the 16th Army that were scattered into battle.

The troops advancing from the line of the Vepsz River were the best in the Polish army. The 1st and 3rd legionary divisions were deployed from legionnaire brigades formed by Pilsudski as part of the Austrian army at the beginning of the First World War. Their backbone was made up of hardened fighters with extensive combat experience. Two other divisions, the 14th Poznan and 16th Pomeranian, were to a large extent staffed by non-commissioned officers and soldiers of the German army, who also went through the war. As the Polish military historian Captain of the General Staff Adam Borkiewicz noted,

"both of these divisions ... were characterized by education on the German tactical doctrine, namely: cohesion in battle, providing themselves with conditions and means of battle ...".

The divisions of legionnaires had the same qualities. In addition, the Polish troops were seized with a patriotic upsurge and the Red Army was looked upon as the heir of the tsar, seeking to enslave Poland.

Other moods prevailed in the troops of Tukhachevsky, even in the most combat-ready of them - the 3rd cavalry corps. P. M. Davydov, who fought in his ranks, who at that time commanded a brigade, recalled how the head of the 10th Cavalry Division, Tomin, reported to Guy:

"Gree regiment of my division during the morning battle with the cavalry of the first Polish army rolled back without my knowledge fifteen miles to

the border village of Lenchik and went to the Germans ... Only four hundred fighters and commanders remained with me.

The lightly wounded corps commissar Postnov, together with the political department, joined the remnants of one of the rifle divisions and crossed the Prussian border. Tomin spoke about the state and mood of his fighters in the following way:

"After today's battle of my regiments and their shameful flight abroad, I do not believe in our ability to catch up with the front. Our horses are useless, the soldiers are exhausted and do not believe us commanders, but believe those who prove that crossing the border is the best way out of the created position. The Germans will disarm us, but not kill us, as the White Poles can do. After all, our corps was a thunderstorm for the Pilsuds! The White Poles hate us. Do you remember what they did when they captured my platoon in Novograd? All twenty-five fighters were shot in the head."

Tukhachevsky believed that if he had received the Cavalry in time, it would have been possible not only to prevent the defeat of the front, but also to take Warsaw. Many years later, he interrupted the question of one of the employees of the headquarters of the Red Army, V. N. Ladukhin, about the Battle of Warsaw:

"I can't fully understand why all of a sudden in August ..." - a characteristic remark: "In war it often happens 'suddenly.'" But here it was not quite "suddenly." You are not the first from whom I hear this question. And I always advise: turn, as in all difficult cases, to Lenin. After all, he clearly said that we then overestimated the preponderance of our forces. This equally applies to the high command, and to the command of both fronts - Western and South-Western " .

And in response to the interlocutor's timid attempt to object, Mikhail Nikolaevich continued:

"I understand that you are interested in particulars. But they are inseparable from the general cause. The command of the Western Front, developing the offensive, had every reason to make some amendments to the

operational plan. Sergei Sergeevich Kamenev did not object to the maneuver of the armies of the Western Front north of Varitava. He, like me, at first was not particularly worried about the left flank of the Western Front, which was supposed to be reinforced by three armies from the Southwestern Front. The appearance of even one cavalry army in the Lublin region at the scheduled time would have thwarted Pilsudski's counterattack ... "

Here Tukhachevsky referred to the well-known words of Lenin:

"During our offensive, advancing too quickly almost to Warsaw, a mistake was undoubtedly made ... This mistake is caused by the fact that the superiority of our forces was overestimated by us."

In hindsight, both the chairman of the Council of People's Commissars and the commander of the Western Front turned out to be strong.

In the book "The Campaign for the Vistula", Tukhachevsky outlined the events associated with the reassignment of the 1st Cavalry:

"The high command, given the need to consolidate the left flank of the Western Front, on August 11 at 3 o'clock gives

Directive to the South-Western Front on the need to change the grouping of the forces of the South-Western Front and, as a matter of urgency, move the cavalry army in the direction of Zamostye Grubeshov. The calculation of time and space shows that this directive of the High Command could certainly be carried out before the transition of the southern Polish grouping to the offensive. If the execution had been somewhat late, then the Polish units that had gone on the offensive would have been faced with the inevitability of a complete defeat, having received a blow from our victorious cavalry army in the rear.

The commander of the Western Front was sure that only one and a half Polish cavalry divisions and "Ukrainian partisan units" were operating against the Cavalry. The latter refers to the Ukrainian army of General Pavlenko. It numbered over 11 thousand fighters, but had only 2 guns and 29 machine guns and was not a serious military force. However, Tukhachevsky was mistaken. At that moment, much larger forces were concentrated against the Cavalry - not only the Polish cavalry, but also a considerable fraction of the infantry. And here Piłsudski did not miss the opportunity to laugh at the defeated enemy:

"Regarding our actions, Mr. Tukhachevsky has another strange misunderstanding. He claims that we have withdrawn almost all the troops from Eastern Galicia, leaving only the Ukrainian formations of Petlyura and General Pavlenko with one cavalry division there. However, he himself doubts this and specifies that some infantry divisions, like fragments of our army, could still remain there. But, while approving this boldness of ours elsewhere, he, it seems to me, is looking for an opportunity to exaggerate the Polish forces assembled against him and at the same time accuse his own southern colleagues in that they did not help him during the defeat near Warsaw. However, the situation was completely different. Only the 18th division and a small part of the cavalry were taken out of our 6th army, and the 12th, 13th and half The 6th division remained where it was. In addition, the 5th division arrived there, badly battered in the battles in the north ... "

The Polish commander-in-chief generally considered Tukhachevsky's calculations for help from the 1st Cavalry and 12th armies to be unfounded, arguing that, in any eventuality, they would not have had time to arrive in time to influence the outcome of the Warsaw battle:

"I confess that both during the war itself and ... and during its analytical analysis, I cannot get rid of the impression that Mr. Tukhachevsky did not at all count on interaction with the south, because he set himself such a distant goal as forcing The Vistula between Plock and Modlin ... And it was pointless to associate the achievement of such a deep goal with the actions of the 12th Army, timidly shifting from foot to foot near the Bug, and with the actions of Budyonny's battered army, which for several days after the failure near Brody did not If the concentration of Soviet troops near Warsaw (which, by the way, I expected) moved Mr. Tukhachevsky more than 200 kilometers from the 12th Army on the Bug, then the "campaign beyond the Vistula" in its lower reaches behind Warsaw (which I did not expect at all) added a good hundred kilometers to this distance, turning into a complete illusion the interaction with the 12th Army that remained somewhere far in the east.

If the Cavalry really began its maneuver to the north on August 11, in accordance with the directive of the commander-in-chief, then go to the rear of the Polish shock

grouping before the success of the counter-offensive from Vepsh was determined, it could only if the Lvov grouping of the Poles remained inactive and the Budennovsky cavalrymen would march without any obstacles, as if in exercises. But we have already seen that it was precisely such a maneuver that the Polish command feared and planned to detain Budyonny at any cost. The Poles had enough strength for this. And the commander of the 1st Cavalry himself believed that his troops could not immediately turn from Lvov to Lublin in those days:

"All attempts by the commander-in-chief to replace the Cavalry with infantry and completely withdraw it to the reserve, starting from August 6, were unsuccessful. On August 13, speaking on a direct wire with the commander of the Western Front, he stated that the Cavalry was now standing in front of a wall of infantry, which it has not yet been crushed."

It turns out that Tukhachevsky knew that in front of the Southwestern Front there were not "partisan units", but an "indestructible wall of infantry", and he was cunning in his book in order to justify himself before history.

Budyonny pointed out that later, on August 16, when Tukhachevsky's directive was finally received to withdraw the cavalry from the battle and concentrate it in the Vladimir-Volynsky area for a strike in the Lublin direction, it was even more impossible than five days earlier. The cavalry fought heavy battles beyond the Bug, and there was no one to replace it. Semyon Mikhailovich argued that "it was physically impossible to withdraw from the battle within one day and make a hundred-kilometer march in order to concentrate in the indicated area on August 20. And if this impossible happened, then with access to Vladimir-Volynsky, the Cavalry would still not be able to take part in the operation against the Lublin grouping of the enemy, which ... operated in the Brest area, "that is, much to the east. So, in fact, it was difficult for Tukhachevsky to blame his neighbors for his own failure.

One cannot but agree with this Budyonny explanation of the actions of the 1st Cavalry during the Battle of Warsaw. In general, we are somehow accustomed to presenting Semyon Mikhailovich as a dashing fighter, devoid of any operational outlook. And one more thing: his name is invariably pronounced next to the name of Voroshilov. And the great and long-standing friendship of Semyon Mikhailovich and Kliment Efremovich has already become an axiom. At Budyonny

perhaps, faith in this friendship was preserved for life. But the "Lugansk mechanic Klim" experienced much more complicated feelings for the commander of the 1st Cavalry. In a confidential letter to Stalin on February 1, 1923, Voroshilov stated without a shadow of embarrassment:

"Budyonny ... too peasant, too popular and very cunning ... In the view of our enemies, Budyonny should play the role of some kind of savior (peasant leader) heading the "people's" movement ... If a serious event ever really happened clash ... of interests between the proletariat and the peasantry, Budyonny would find himself with the latter ... I know Budyonny better than anyone else in the party, and I think with you that he must be used for the revolution entirely. I did everything in my power in this regard, and as if the results were positive.

The future people's commissar of defense was especially worried about the incredible popularity of Budyonny among the cavalry:

"Our dear comrades (in the center), without realizing it, are shouting too much about Budyonny, the "Budyonnovsk" army, "Budyonnovists" and other things, which in no way corresponds to either party or general revolutionary tasks. Today the commissar of headquarters 1 1st Cavalry comrade Ter told me an incident from the life of a squadron at the 1st Cavalry Army. When asked by a young Red Army soldier what he would fight for, the latter answered: "For Budyonny."

It turns out that "friend Klim" used "friend Semyon" entirely in the interests of the party and the proletarian revolution, and in which case he could slap, like the former commander of the Cavalry Corps Boris Mokeevich Dumenko, which he proudly recalled in the same letter:

"If I hadn't removed Dumenko in time, he would have caused us big trouble."

And then he seriously feared that in the event of a conflict between the party and the peasantry, the people would shake the old days, remember Razin and Pugachev and elect Budyonny as their leader. He, like Tukhachevsky, was suspected of Bonapartism. It is impossible to allow the Red Army soldiers to go into battle and die "For Budyonny". It was supposed to die "For the Party"; "For the world revolution"; first "For Lenin"; then "For Stalin".

In essence, Budyonny could have suffered the same fate as Tukhachevsky (in the 5th Army, for example, soldiers could well have died "For Tukhachevsky", and it was not for nothing that the word "fifth army soldier" enjoyed the same respect as "cavalryman"). Only Semyon Mikhailovich became uncomfortable in the conflict between the party and the peasantry, and Mikhail Nikolayevich - in the conflict with the old, pre-revolutionary intelligentsia, the same former tsarist officers. Everything was in the power of chance. Another thing is that in the end, Stalin and Voroshilov made their choice in favor of Budyonny, deciding to use his popularity and the fact that in the civil war Semyon Mikhailovich was most closely associated with them, so that his successes are theirs, Stalin and Voroshilov, successes. All the same, it is necessary to have a layer of devoted commanders in the army. And Semyon Mikhailovich is a simple man, not very educated, of peasant origin. It is more difficult to expect a dirty trick from him than from a know-it-all aristocrat. And in the end, Budyonny was among those who judged and sent Tukhachevsky and his comrades to execution. But that was after a long seventeen years. Then, near Warsaw, nothing seemed to foreshadow a tragic

interchanges.

G. S. Isserson, who is almost apologetic towards Tukhachevsky, nevertheless admits that the latter

"due to his youth and still insufficient experience in conducting large-scale strategic operations in the difficult days of the defeat of his armies on the Vistula, he could not be at the proper height, although he showed a broad understanding of the situation on the scale of the entire Polish theater of war. For the first time, finding himself in such a position, bearing enormous responsibility before the Revolution, he experienced a great tragedy in the August days of 1920 ... Tukhachevsky lost time for a difficult, but still possible regrouping from the far-reaching right wing to his center and left flank ... Tukhachevsky with his headquarters was far in the rear. his control over the course of the operation was based on telegraph wires, and when the wire connection was interrupted, the commander was without

troops, because he could no longer give them a single order.

Tukhachevsky himself emphasized:

"Our forces by ... the decisive moment turned out to be fragmented and looking in different directions. Those efforts that were made by the high command to regroup the bulk of the Southwestern Front in the Lublin direction, unfortunately, due to a number of unexpected reasons, were not crowned with success, and the regrouping was up in the air."

Mikhail Nikolayevich did not specify that the "unexpected reasons" were reduced mainly to poor communication performance and cipher clerk errors, due to which directives were often delivered to addressees with a delay of a day. But he hinted at the unseemly behavior of the Revolutionary Military Council of the Southwestern Front, comparing the Warsaw operation with the 1914 operation in East Prussia:

"There, Rennenkampf set out to take Koenigsberg and moved his entire army to the northwest, while Hindenburg retreated to the southeast, to the flank of Samsonov's army. This allowed him to concentrate all his forces against half of the Russian troops, who were counting on interaction neighbor."

The commander of the Western Front hoped that, having "at least 14 ... rifle divisions and the 3rd cavalry corps against the right flank of the Polish main grouping" and taking into account the "moral superiority", one could count on victory. He neglected intelligence data. As early as August 10, the order of the command of the 3rd Polish Army of August 8 fell into the hands of the fighters of the 1st Cavalry, where the task was set to withdraw to concentrate in the Vepsha area. Tukhachevsky and the commander-in-chief considered the order disinformation. The fact is that in order to cover the retreat, the 1st and 3rd divisions of the legionnaires attacked and pressed the formations of the 12th army. Therefore, the command of the Southwestern Front decided that the divisions listed in the order were still in their previous positions and were not going to regroup. Tukhachevsky and Kamenev believed Yegorov and Stalin. Until the start of the Polish counter-offensive, the Western Front was never able to open the concentration of the enemy strike force. The front commander was convinced that almost the entire Polish army was concentrated in Warsaw and to the north of it. He continued to carry out his plan. Meanwhile, on August 14, the 5th Polish Army launched a counteroffensive, and one incident caused by this counteroffensive turned out to be, in the opinion of

Tukhachevsky, fatal for the outcome of the entire Warsaw battle:

"The field headquarters of the 4th Army, which moved to the city of Tsekhanov during the offensive, was unexpectedly attacked by small units of the enemy that had broken through between the 4th and 15th armies and had to hastily withdraw and go west to their units. Such an act disrupted the connection between the headquarters front and the 4th Army, which was no longer restored until the beginning of our retreat, which, of course, happened due to the complete absence of any means of strategic communication at our disposal.

Tukhachevsky thought that Sikorsky's troops would be easy prey:

"The 5th Army, the weakest in number of units and the weakest in spirit, crossed

on the offensive against our 15th and 3rd armies, when our freshest, most combat-ready units of the 4th army hung over its exposed left flank. The joy of this event for the front command was extremely great, and it gave the order to the 15th and 3rd armies on the entire front to meet the enemy offensive with a decisive counterattack and throw it back across the Wkra River; The 4th Army, leaving a barrier in the Torn direction, with all its forces to attack the enemy who went on the offensive in the flank and rear in the Novogeorgievsk (Modlin. - B.S.) direction from the Rationzh - Drobin area. It seemed that the death of the enemy's 5th army was inevitable, and its destruction would entail the most decisive consequences in the further course of all our operations.

But the good-hearted dreams of the commander again, as had happened more than once in his combat practice, were shattered by the almighty "suddenly". Tukhachevsky explained the failure that had befallen him this way:

"The Poles were lucky. Our 4th Army, where the new commander (in early August, a few days before the last attack on Warsaw, E. N. Sergeev was replaced by the chief of staff A. D. Shuvaev. - B. S.) lost contact with Headquarters of the front, did not realize clearly in the developing situation. Not receiving orders from the front, she put up some formless half-barrier in the Rationzh - Drobin area and scattered her main forces in the Vlaclavsk - Plock sector. The 5th army of the enemy was saved, and completely with impunity, having our powerful army of four rifle and two cavalry divisions on the flank and rear, continued the offensive against the 3rd and 15th armies.

In the light of subsequent events, Tukhachevsky's joy remains a complete mystery. After all, even if the 4th Army did not lose communication with the front headquarters and defeated the 5th Polish Army, this could only affect the outcome of the battle for the worse for the Reds. Firstly, even in this case, Sikorsky's troops would hardly have been completely destroyed. He had four and a half infantry divisions and up to two divisions of cavalry - a force practically equal to the forces of the 4th Army, moreover, they were in better conditions in terms of supplies and rather outnumbered the enemy morally, contrary to Tukhachevsky's assertion. Secondly, and most importantly, the planned counterattack against the 5th Polish Army, if carried out in full, would have taken the bulk of the troops of the Western Front to the northwest even further and would only have reduced their chances of salvation after the success of the counteroffensive of the Polish Middle Front .

And the very offensive to the Danzig corridor in reality

was not as decisive as Tukhachevsky attached to it. The interruption of supplies through Danzig for several days at that moment could no longer affect the success of the Polish counter-offensive. By the way, the most important transport for the Middle Front, which eliminated the urgent need for small arms ammunition, arrived on August 12 not at all through Danzig, but through Romania. PC. M. Davydov cites a conversation on a direct wire between G. D. Gai and D. A. Shuvaev on the night of August 15-16 about the invasion of the Danzig corridor:

"You ordered one regiment to be placed at the disposal of the head of the 12th division for the capture of Strasbourg. I don't understand why we needed this city so urgently? Another regiment of Tomin's division, according to you

order is trying to break into the town of Lubitsch near the city of Thorn. Why, who needs this?.. Decisions must be made taking into account the specific situation... The remaining parts of the corps are concentrated at your request in two places remote from each other to force the Vistula near the cities of Neshava and Vlotslavsk. Is it possible, with such a dispersed state of the troops, to achieve the success expected of us by Tukhachevsky?

In fact, a powerful blow in the north, which the commander of the Western Front was counting on, was delivered not with a clenched fist, but with spread fingers and did not bring decisive success.

The offensive of the Polish shock group from the line of the Vepsh River, which began on August 16, fell on the weak Mozyr group and the 58th division of the 12th army. For Tukhachevsky, it came as a surprise. True, in recent days, logically speaking, he did not rule out attacks by the Poles against the left flank of the front and therefore persistently sought to be transferred to his subordination to the Cavalry and on August 14 reoriented the 16th Army to cross the Vistula south of Warsaw, demanding that one division be allocated to the front reserve. But it was too late.

The Mozyr group and the 58th division were defeated on the very first day of the Polish counterattack. The same fate befell the 8th Division of the 16th Army allocated to the front reserve. As Borkiewicz points out,

"on the evening of August 16, the Mozyr group actually ceased to exist as an operational unit."

The rout happened so quickly that parts of the group and its headquarters did not have time to inform either the headquarters of the 16th Army or the headquarters of the Western Front about the beginning of the Polish offensive. Tukhachevsky learned about the incident only on the 17th in the morning. He gave the order to his northern armies to start withdrawing to avoid the trap. The 16th Army and the Mozyr Group (that it no longer actually exists, the commander did not yet know) were to delay the Polish counterattack grouping, which was planned to be crushed by a strike on Lublin by the 1st Cavalry and 12th armies. Tukhachevsky suspected that

"The lack of means of communication and the stupid travel of the 4th Army along the Danzig corridor, apparently, did not allow Commander-4 to receive the given order in time."

In fact, according to Davydov, Commander Shuvaev received a directive to withdraw to the southeast. But it was impossible to assemble the divisions and brigades scattered far from each other in a short time. Therefore, Shuvaev, not realizing the seriousness of the situation on the left wing of the front, decided to act like a drunkard from a joke, looking for the keys not where he had lost, but under a lantern, where it was light. Commander-4

ordered his troops and Guy's corps to continue operations to force the Vistula, which by that time had lost all meaning.

The units of the Western Front that found themselves behind enemy lines lost all combat capability. On the night of August 19-20, from Siedlce, which had been occupied three days earlier, Piłsudski wrote to the Minister of War, General Sosnkowski:

It's hard to even imagine what's going on here. None

the road cannot be passed quietly - there are so many scattered and scattered, but also organized detachments with cannons and machine guns wandering around the environs. So far, the local population and the rear services of our various divisions are coping with them, which, however, must go further, behind their divisions; after their departure, such a terrifying emptiness remains that if it were not for the armed peasants, then tomorrow or the day after tomorrow the neighborhood of Siedlce would probably be in the power of the Bolsheviks defeated and scattered by us, and I would be sitting in fortified cities with detachments of armed residents.

Troops that armed peasants can easily cope with are already something more like a crowd with weapons, and not like a regular army. Tukhachevsky suddenly lost most of the divisions subordinate to him, and it was impossible to rely on the rest. He experienced one of the most difficult shocks in his life, comparable only to the German captivity. In fact, Tukhachevsky again found himself in captivity, in captivity of circumstances - cut off from the troops, powerless to change anything during the battle.

Isserson testified:

"Gukhachevsky ... remained an indifferent spectator of the defeat of his armies. The more painful were his experiences. When the picture of the catastrophe that had already broken out became clear to Tukhachevsky and when he could no longer do anything, he locked himself in his staff car and did not show himself to anyone all day ... Many years later, in a private conversation, he said ... that he had aged that day for ten years, grew up a lot and understood the full significance of Clausewitz's thought about "frictions" in the war ... He undoubtedly had in mind the "frictions" that he had to experience in his relations with the High Command, the leadership of the South-Western Front and Cavalry and which he could not overcome."

In fact, it was useless to hope for help from Budyonny. Under no circumstances did the Cavalry have time to hit Pilsudski's troops in the rear. By August 22, the Poles reached the line Ostroleka - Lomza Bialystok, while the bulk of Tukhachevsky's armies remained west of this line. On August 21, Voroshilov, already after the 1st Horse, obeying the order, moved to Vladimir-Volynsky, sent a telegram to the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic, where he condemned the recall of the Cavalry from near Lvov:

".. The removal of the Cavalry from the Lvov front at the moment when the army came close to the city, chaining up to seven enemy divisions to itself (about seven divisions - a poetic exaggeration common to the military, in reality, one and a half cavalry and two and a half infantry divisions. - B. S.), is a major mistake, fraught with significant consequences. I will not talk about what moral effect such a withdrawal has on the army. You will take this into account yourself if you remember our huge losses in recent battles, but I must say that, continuing the battles for the possession of Lbov, we do not

would only serve as a magnet for the enemy, but at the same time the most serious threat to the rear of his strike group, which we could always deliver a crushing blow through Lublin ... "

Kliment Efremovich and Semyon Mikhailovich were by no means such fools and laymen in military affairs as they are often portrayed. They perfectly understood that they would not be able to threaten the rear from Lvov.

Polish shock group, and that even the capture of Lvov by Tukhachevsky would be like a dead poultice. But the leaders of the Cavalry wanted the glory that even a short-term occupation of Lvov brought (there was nothing to think about to keep the city). In addition, the occupation of the rich capital of Eastern Galicia could really raise the morale of the Budyonovites, but how exactly, the Revolutionary Military Council of the Cavalry preferred not to specify. The fact is that the cavalymen solved many of their problems through "self-supply", in other words, robbery. In the winter of the 20th, they gloriously plundered Rostov, so that the whole Red Army was in an uproar. It cannot be said that Voroshilov and Budyonny encouraged robberies - they perfectly understood their corrupting influence on the fighters. But they treated this as a necessary evil (many fought in order to profit), making sure that the revelry did not overflow.

After retreating from Lvov, on August 23, Tukhachevsky ordered the Cavalry to move on a raid on Zamosc. He himself was against this, realizing that it was no longer possible to save the Western Front from defeat, and gave the order for a risky cavalry offensive only at the insistence of Commander-in-Chief S. S. Kamenev. As a result, the cavalry escaped with difficulty from the encirclement and completely decomposed, marking its campaign across Polish territory with large-scale Jewish pogroms. Writer Isaac Babel, who served in the editorial office of the newspaper "Red Cavalryman", during the ill-fated raid on Zamosc recorded "the beginning of the end of the 1st Cavalry." He noted that "commanders were suppressed" and "terrible signs of decay" appeared. Even worse was the situation in the neighboring 12th Army. Babel described it as follows:

"An institution called the 12th Army. For one fighter - 4 rear men, 2 ladies, 2 chests with things, and even this only fighter does not fight. The Twelfth Army destroys the front and the Cavalry, opens our flanks, forces us to plug all holes with itself. They surrendered, opened the front of the Ural regiment or the Bashkir brigade (previously both of these units were in the Kolchak army. - B.S.). The panic is shameful, the army is not combat-ready. Types of soldiers. Russian Red Army infantryman - barefoot (as Pilsudsky testifies, barefoot soldiers were not uncommon in the Polish army either. - B.S.), not only not modernized, but completely "wretched Russia", wanderers, swollen, leathery, undersized, hungry men ... Rumors, and then facts: the driven into Volodymyr-Volynsky dead end supply of the 1st Cavalry, our headquarters moved to Lutsk, a lot of prisoners and property were captured from the 12th Army, the army is fleeing.

Things were no better in the Cavalry. As Zilist, authorized by the Revolutionary Military Council, reported to Lenin himself:

"The 1st Cavalry Army and the 6th Division destroyed the Jewish population on their way, robbing and killing on their way ... The 44th Division also did not lag behind ..."

Cavalrymen of the 6th division, commanded by I. R. Apanasenko, stabbed to death the military commissar G. G. Shepelev, who was trying to prevent the pogroms. Several of the most decomposed regiments had to

disarm, and shoot several dozen instigators. It was too risky to continue the war in such a mood of the troops. In the days of the Battle of Warsaw, a knot of hostile relations began between Tukhachevsky, on the one hand, and Voroshilov and Budyonny, on the other. In the 37th came the tragic denouement.

Many years later, Tukhachevsky discussed the details of the Battle of Warsaw with Isserson and Uborevich. Isserson recounted the content of this conversation as follows:

"Jeronim Petrovich Uborevich asked Tukhachevsky why he did not appear among his troops on the Vistula in these critical days and did not personally organize their breakthrough from the encirclement north of Warsaw. Uborevich said that he would have made his way to his troops by any means - by car, by plane, finally, on a horse - and, taking direct command, would lead them out of the encirclement ... After thinking, Tukhachevsky replied that the role of the front commander was then understood differently, and added that now, of course, to teach and educate the highest command staff on this example is impossible, and that in a difficult situation, the highest commanders should take over the leadership of the troops.

I think that if Tukhachevsky went to his defeated troops, nothing would fundamentally change either during the Soviet-Polish war or in his own destiny. The future marshal had little chance of dying in battle or being captured (during the Warsaw operation, not one of the army commanders of the Western Front was wounded, killed or captured). Unless he would have remembered the experience of a company officer and led the fighters with a rifle in their hands to a breakthrough. Budberg saw one of the reasons for the collapse of the white cause in the belief of the young Kolchak generals that they "should go on the attack themselves and that this is the guarantee of the troops' confidence in them and military success":

"The army commander does not have the right to exchange for platoon commanders, because then a huge and important sphere of army management will remain without an executor. Of course, the troops must know and believe that when the situation orders, then all their commanders to the very top will come to them and divide with them both battle, and lodging for the night, and victory, and failure, and satiety, and hunger. Those who say that the sight of an army commander going on the attack with a rifle in his hands inspires the troops, they are telling a lie, because in modern combat they will see it a few dozen people, no more, and even those can hardly make out who it is running among them. The halo of the chief is not created by this, it is created by trust in the knowledge and experience of the chief, respect for his valor, honor and high moral virtues and love for him for his concern for his subordinates.

In a civil war, it occasionally happened that the top commanders really succeeded by personal example in stopping a faltering unit (battalion or regiment) and again leading it into battle. Thus, in the summer of 1919, near Ufa, Frunze dragged the Red Army men who were about to flee, and in the autumn of that year, near Petrograd, Trotsky, sitting on a horse, managed to turn back the chains of the rifle regiment retreating in disorder and led them on the offensive. In his memoirs, the chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council commented on this episode:

"..Does a person who leads the army as a whole have the right to endanger himself in individual battles? To this I will answer: there are no absolute rules of conduct either for peace or for war. It all depends on the circumstances ... We could not infect this under an army made by fire

revolutionary impulse through circulars or semi-anonymous appeals. Before the eyes of the soldiers, today it was necessary to win that authority, which tomorrow would justify in their eyes the harsh demands of the top leadership. Where there was no tradition, a vivid example was needed. Personal risk was necessary

overhead on the way to victory..."

In both cases, both with Trotsky and Frunze, the "red generals", taking on the role of lower commanders, were able to turn the tide only in a small sector of the front - but rumors of their heroism spread very widely throughout the troops. At the same time, the situation for the Soviet troops was by no means hopeless. The Red Army already had a numerical superiority and moral superiority over the armies of Kolchak and Yudenich and had every chance of defeating them. Near Warsaw, the troops of the Western Front were in a hopeless situation, and if Tukhachevsky had raised a company or regiment in a successful attack, this would not have replaced his lack of communication with divisions and armies, would not have caused a turning point in an unfavorable situation. The young front commander understood this very well. He considered himself, to use the words of Budberg, to the highest category of "not commanders, but directing the battle, and acting no longer with his hands, but with his head, taking not with muscles and physical courage, but with knowledge of the matter, combat experience, foresight and the ability to dispose, maneuver and beat the enemy not on a patch, but on a broad front. True, on the Vistula, Tukhachevsky clearly lacked all these qualities. The hindsight of the commander of the Western Front and his lack of experience in leading army groups contributed to the disaster.

If Tukhachevsky went to his dying armies, I repeat, it would hardly have been destined for him to find death on the battlefield or be in Polish captivity. The army headquarters and the rear managed to retreat to the east. Although sometimes they had to retreat under enemy fire. My grandfather, B. M. Sokolov, at that time the head of the medical district in one of the divisions of the Western Front, told how he and his grandmother fled from Pultusk on the sanitary line, and shells exploded along the road. But the Polish gunners fired poorly, and not a single shell hit the carts departing along the road.

However, Tukhachevsky still had a small chance to drop out of the game for a while, if he found himself, for any need, at the headquarters of Guy's cavalry corps. Then the front commander could be interned in East Prussia. From there, the soldiers and commanders of the 4th and 15th armies returned only in the autumn of 1921. With such a development of events, Tukhachevsky would not have been able to participate in the suppression of the Kronstadt and Tambov uprisings and, who knows, perhaps he would not have continued his career in the Red Army so rapidly, he would have ended up on the sidelines, would not have risen so high, but he would have received at least a meager , taking into account the scale of repression, but the chance to avoid death in the 37th.

Tukhachevsky still believed that by replenishing the defeated troops of the front, it would be possible to again inflict a decisive defeat on the Poles. He claimed:

"The troops were determined. The lost operation pushed them to desire a new offensive. We had every chance to turn luck back in our favor. The only question was who would prepare earlier and who would go on the offensive earlier."

Trotsky did not share Tukhachevsky's optimism. The Chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic recalled:

".. I found moods in Moscow in favor of a second Polish war. Now Rykov also moved to another camp: "Once we started," he said, "we must

stop." The command of the Western Front was encouraging: enough reinforcements arrived, artillery was updated, etc. Desire was the father of thought. "What do we have on the Western Front? I objected. - Morally broken frames, which are now filled with raw human dough. It is impossible to fight with such an army... One can still somehow defend oneself with such an army, retreating and preparing a second army in the rear, but it is senseless to think that such an army can again rise in a victorious offensive along a path littered with its own debris. "I declared that repeating the mistake already made would cost ten times as much and that I would not submit to the impending decision, but would appeal to the party. to make peace, no matter how hard, made a proper impression on him.

It was decided to send Trotsky to the Western Front, and based on the results of his report, develop a plan of action.

Tukhachevsky, recovering from the shock caused by the defeat, was determined. As early as August 17, a meeting of the peace conference was held in Minsk with the participation of the Polish delegation. However, on August 20, the commander of the Western Front issued an order stating that the Polish delegates were pursuing exclusively espionage goals, and argued that peace could only be concluded "on the ruins of white Poland." The Politburo had to issue a special resolution condemning "worse than a tactless order that undermines the policy of the party and government." The resumption of the Polish offensive in early September fully confirmed Trotsky's correctness. The troops of the Western and Southwestern fronts, with almost no resistance, rolled back to the east. Tukhachevsky stated:

"The Poles went on the offensive first, and our retreat became inevitable."

As a self-critical assessment of one's own actions as commander of the Western Front, the following confession looks like in Mikhail Nikolayevich's book New Questions of War, written in the 1930s:

"Very often, commanders were carried away by the whirlpool of events, and did not lead, organize or accelerate it."

So the whirlwind of the campaign against Warsaw and Berlin captured Tukhachevsky. It seemed that the Polish front was about to collapse, we had to hurry, otherwise the Entente would have time to help Pilsudski, there was no time for the subtleties of organization, the main thing was that the troops move forward faster. And as a result...

Commander-in-Chief S. S. Kamenev realized the hopelessness of waging war with Poland. On October 12, 1920, on the day the Soviet-Polish truce came into force, he proposed to the Politburo to throw all their forces against the Wrangel army in the Crimea, arguing that the Red Army was still unable to fight Poland:

"We cannot count on the fact that before the liquidation of Wrangel we will be able, continuing the fight against him, to devote such forces and

funds for the West in order to restore our

combat power to the extent that guarantees us success in the fight against the Poles if they broke the terms of the armistice ... A sharp massing of forces and means is necessary against one of ... the opponents, and precisely against Wrangel, due to the general situation; a certain risk is associated with this decision in view of the weakening of our forces in the west, but even with a half-hearted decision this risk cannot be sufficiently eliminated either, since there is no certainty that, simultaneously with the struggle in the south, we will be able to give the west the means for a complete restoration his relics."

The conclusion of the armistice with Poland was preceded by Trotsky's visit to the headquarters of the Western Front. Lev Davidovich described this visit as follows:

"At the headquarters of the front, I found moods in favor of a second war. But there was no certainty in these moods ... The lower I went down the military ladder - through the army to the division, regiment and company, the clearer the impossibility of an offensive war became. I sent Lenin a letter on this subject ... and he himself went on a further detour. Two or three days spent at the front were quite enough to confirm the conclusion with which I arrived at the front. I returned to Moscow, and the Politburo almost unanimously issued decision in favor of immediate peace."

Poland also strove for peace. Polish troops advanced far to the east, occupying Minsk without a fight in the last days before the truce, but then leaving the city (under the terms of the truce and the Peace of Riga concluded in March 1921, the Belarusian capital remained in the neutral zone on Soviet territory, where only a limited number of TROOPS). Before them were the demoralized remnants of the defeated armies of the Western Front. In fact, the path to Smolensk and Moscow was open. However, the spring thaw was approaching, and the war threatened to drag on. Most importantly, the Poles were not at all eager to capture Moscow for General Wrangel. As Piłsudski wrote as early as the beginning of 1919:

"Perhaps I could have reached Moscow and driven the Bolsheviks out of there. But then what? .. They have a lot of places. And I won't remake Moscow into either London or Warsaw. I will order to write on the walls of the Kremlin: "It is forbidden to speak Russian"..."

If in the confrontation with Soviet Russia, which was striving to ignite the flames of the proletarian revolution around the world, Poland could count on the help of the Entente powers, then if Wrangel, a supporter of "one and indivisible Russia", came to power in Moscow, Piłsudski could no longer rely on the English French support for Polish independence, wish the Russian "white" government to restore some form of control over Poland. The "head of the Polish state" clearly considered the Bolsheviks, who nevertheless declared the recognition of Poland's independence, a lesser evil in comparison with Denikin, Kolchak and Wrangel. The Poles would probably have been able to reach Moscow in the fall of the 20th - but then what? Swap one unfriendly Russian government for another no less hostile to Polish interests? Piłsudski was too experienced a politician to succumb to the temptation to plant a Russian general in the Kremlin with the help of Polish bayonets. 12

October 1920, the Soviet-Polish truce came into force, and on 18

On March 21st, on the day when the troops under the command of Tukhachevsky stormed the rebellious Kronstadt, a peace treaty was signed in Riga. Poland in Belorussia held on to the line of the old German trenches, so that here the border ran roughly where the front had been established in the First World War. In Ukraine, the Poles kept Eastern Galicia and Volhynia, which had been handed over to them by the Petliura government. The border passed here along the Zbruch River. Petliurists and Bulak-Balakhovich's People's Volunteer Army detachments tried to continue the fight against the Red Army on their own, but were defeated in November 1920. Operations against Bulak-Balakhovich were led by Tukhachevsky, but this victory over poorly armed partisan groups was only very small consolation for the unsuccessful campaign on the Vistula. A few years later, in a conversation with Lydia, Nord Tukhachevsky explained his defeat near Warsaw as follows:

"I clearly saw that after all, my army consists of 50 percent of all rabble, and that it is not what I would like to have. That I still do not have enough experience and knowledge for a big war ... Sometimes I had to rely on the experience of others. Others sometimes let them down badly... The unfortunate strategists from the Revolutionary Military Council also played into the hands of the Poles. Smilga, observing his political control, got mixed up in other people's affairs, and since we almost shot him. Schwartz believed that he, the General headquarters colonel, a better strategist than I ... and tried to act in his own way ... "

If such a conversation actually took place (and we know about it only from the words of the interlocutor of the commander of the Western Front), then Mikhail Nikolayevich here, as they say, is strong in hindsight. Neither his orders, nor the correspondence and conversations over the direct wire confirm that, even during the operation, Tukhachevsky doubted the quality of his own troops or his ability to command the front in a battle closer to the conditions of the First World War than other battles of the civil war. But he will indeed strive to share responsibility with other participants and organizers of the campaign against Warsaw for the rest of his life.

Give Kronstadt!

The uprising of the sailors of Kronstadt in March 1921 was a reaction to the policy of war communism, which continued after the end of the civil war. At the same time, uprisings raged in Tambov and a number of other provinces. The peasantry, ruined by the surplus appropriation, could no longer endure it, especially when the White armies were finally defeated and the return of the landowners could not be feared.

Most of the garrison of the Kronstadt fortress were from peasant families. They were well aware of the hardships that the countryside had to endure.

One of the few participants in the uprising who survived until the early 1990s, sailor Ivan Yermolaev, a former member of the revolutionary troika of the Volga Flotilla detachment transferred to Kronstadt, conveys the mood of the Kronstadters on the eve of the uprising:

"They were mostly old sailors-sroyers who fought on the Volga and other fronts of the civil war and returned" to winter quarters. by correspondence.

We knew that our families were crushed by the surplus appropriation, terrorized by the food detachments, driven to starvation, and there was no light ahead, no hope for improvement. Often, in conversations about the situation in the country, grumbling broke out, and at meetings there were demands to turn to the government with demands to alleviate the lot of the peasantry, cancel the surplus appraisal, remove the barrage detachments and allow free trade.

Life was a little easier for the workers of Petrograd, among whom the Kronstadters had many relatives and acquaintances.

The situation was also aggravated by the fact that the bulk of the sailors existed on a meager food ration, while the leadership of the fleet lived, as they say, in a big way. The commander of the Baltic Fleet, F.F. Raskolnikov, whom fate made a dissident and exile at the end of his life, and his wife, writer Larisa Reisner, the prototype of the female commissar in Vsevolod Vishnevsky's *Optimistic Tragedy*, were by no means such ascetics as the Bolsheviks are presented in a well-intentioned play. They lived in a luxurious mansion, kept servants, did not deny themselves anything. Sailors Fedor Fedorovich considered second-class people. He even installed a kind of segregation in the galley. When Raskolnikov and his staff on yachts arrived in Kronstadt, soup with herring or vobla was prepared for ordinary soldiers. For the headquarters and commanding staff - a full three-course dinner, and soup - with meat. For Raskolnikov himself and persons especially close to him, real delicacies were prepared. He replaced two-thirds of the commanders and commissars of the fleet, appointing people on the basis of personal loyalty, and not on professional qualities. On the battleship *Petropavlovsk*, the sailors complained to the Commissar of the Fleet Nikolai Nikolayevich Kuzmin that Raskolnikov and his entourage inspected wine cellars more often than gunpowder ones. They demanded the creation of a special commission to inspect the apartments of their commanders and commissars, not without reason suspecting that there would be not only luxury items, but also food supplies that did not reach the sailor's cauldron.

However, everything was in vain. The chairman of the Kronstadt department of the Baltic Fleet Tribunal, Assar, reported to Petrograd:

"The Kronstadt department of the RVT of the Baltic Fleet is conducting an intense struggle to eradicate the abuses of officials. But it should be noted that often this struggle does not lead to the desired result ... The Tribunal brings to trial a responsible employee according to the degree of crime, removes him from his post ... But as a result it turns out that in a few days, through all sorts of reputations, these people are transferred at the request of some central body to another district, to a more favorable place (position) for him. Thus, instead of correction, he receives a promotion and freely does his job. .. The mass sees all this and grumbles ... "

The mass grumbled also because Raskolnikov and his comrades fattened at their expense. The food ration for the sailors of Kronstadt was constantly decreasing. The sailors did not always receive the food they were entitled to. Stocks of fish, meat, flour were available for no more than 20 days. On January 27, 1921, Raskolnikov was temporarily removed from his post as head of the Naval Forces of the Baltic Fleet and recalled to Moscow. However, this did not prevent a spontaneous outburst of indignation a month later.

But unrest began not in Kronstadt, but in St. Petersburg. In mid-February, after the food ration was once again reduced, the Pipe and Baltic plants, the Laferma factory, and a number of other enterprises went on strike. On February 24, the workers went on a demonstration, demanding bread and the democratization of the Soviets, the elimination of Bolshevik dominance in them. The authorities sent cadets of military schools to disperse the protesters with weapons in their hands, introduced martial law, made mass arrests, calling what was happening a "counter-revolutionary rebellion."

On February 25, in Kronstadt, the crew of the battleship "Sevastopol" at a general meeting decided to send their representatives to Petrograd to clarify the causes of labor unrest. The next day, the same delegation was sent from Petropavlovsk. When the delegates returned, the sailors of the "Sevastopol" and "Petropavlovsk" on February 27 adopted a resolution demanding

"freedom of speech and press for workers and peasants, anarchists and socialist parties, freedom of assembly and trade unions and peasant associations";

the release of "political prisoners of the socialist parties, as well as all workers and peasants, Red Army soldiers and sailors imprisoned in connection with the workers' and peasants' movements";

re-elections of Soviets by secret ballot; liquidation of all "political departments and communist combat detachments";

immediate abolition of detachments;

allowing peasants to freely dispose of land and trade in products received from it;

soldering equations for all workers.

She was supported by almost all the communists of the battleships. Decided to promulgate the resolution at a city-wide rally on Anchor Square on March 1.

Commissar Kuzmin returned to Kronstadt from Petrograd only the day before. February 28, he visited the "Petropavlovsk". Later, on March 25, 1921, after the completion of the Kronstadt epic, Nikolai Nikolayevich had to give explanations at a meeting of the Petrograd Soviet. Kuzmin justified himself:

"In general, the picture did not paint such a situation that there would be an uprising, a big movement. If this were clear, then, believe me, it would be possible to close the hatches and detain everyone. But we had Petrograd in front of us, where there was also a heavy mood, and yet "I managed to calm them down, so they thought here. When I came on the ship, a certain mood was created. A resolution was proposed, which they adopted. The resolution was very subtly and cleverly drawn up, there were no terrible ideas, there was talk of re-elections of the Council. Re-elections of the Council should have been 5 March. The meeting discussed this question, and also discussed the question of handicraft industry, the removal of "barriers" - a question that had been resolved in principle in Petrograd, etc. Nothing terrible was felt. A certain sharp mood was felt ... "

The commissar then sent a reassuring telegram to Petrograd: the situation in the fortress was changing for the better. As a result, it was decided to send the "all-Russian headman" M. I. Kalinin to the rally. The hope was that the chairman of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee would be able to change the mood of the sailors. By the way, this was hoped not only in Moscow, but also in

Kronstadt itself.

The leader of the uprising, a clerk from "Petropavlovsk" Stepan Maksimovich Petrichenko, who headed the Kronstadt revolutionary committee, in 1927 applied to the consulate in Riga with a request to restore him to Soviet citizenship. In a statement addressed to Kalinin, he wrote:

"The Kronstadt uprising fell on my head against my good will or desire ... I was neither soul nor body in the preparation of this uprising (it was unexpected for me). I took part again because I too sensitively took everything to heart the needs of the working people and was always ready to lay down his life for the interests of the working people.

This opportunity presented itself to the unfortunate clerk, who has since become an agent of Soviet intelligence, 20 years later, in 1947, in the Gulag, where the grateful communist government eventually took him. In the meantime, in Riga, he still had to write a special report on the events in Kronstadt, which also covered the role of Kalinin:

"Now, just a minute - here the question is imposed: if Comrade Kalinin had announced at this time, i.e., on Anchor Square, the so-called NEP, then there would have been calm and compromise on this and would there have been our uprising? How did I think, but there are a lot of them (it must be borne in mind that not only non-party people, but even sympathizers and communists joined the revolution), then I dare to assert that a compromise would have been found and there would have been no uprising.

But Mikhail Ivanovich did not compromise. On the morning of March 1, in the city arena, and then on Anchor Square, he spoke to 16 thousand sailors and Red Army soldiers with by no means the most successful of his speeches. I. Yermolaev remembered this rally, which was truly fateful for thousands of sailors, and for the whole country, for the rest of his life:

"Having opened the rally, Fleet Commissar Kuzmin gave the floor to Kalinin, whom the entire arena met with thunderous applause. Everyone was waiting for him to say at least something about how it was planned to improve the situation of the peasants, and Kalinin began his speech by praising the exploits and merits of the Kronstadt sailors and soldiers in the revolution, spoke about victories on the fronts of the civil war, about the achievements of Soviet power on the economic front, about the difficulties experienced by the country.

Loud remarks were heard in the hall of the arena: "Enough of beautiful words! Tell me better, when will you finish with the food requisition? When will you remove the food detachments?" Shouts from different places sounded impressive. Assessing the situation, Kalinin, Fleet Commissioner Kuzmin and City Council Chairman Vasilyev from the rostrum proposed to hold a rally separately among the sailors and among the Red Army, arguing that the arena does not accommodate everyone. This maneuver was not supported, the sailors suggested moving the rally to Anchor Square, where the people moved ...

When Kalinin appeared on the podium, he was greeted with applause here too, they were waiting for what he would say. But when he again began to talk about the merits of the sailors, about the achievements and difficulties of the Soviet country, exclamations were again heard: "Enough of praise! Tell me, when will the surplus appropriation be canceled? When will they stop strangling the peasant?" Kalinin tried to somehow justify the surplus appropriation, but then a broad-shouldered, middle-aged sailor got up on the podium and shouted loudly: "Enough of the laudatory chatter!

food detachments, you give free trade, we demand free re-election of the Soviets!" Further, in the noise and outcries, it was difficult to make out anything in the sailor's speech.

In response, Kalinin began to reproach the participants in the rally ... that they were playing a risky game against the Soviet government, like gamblers, putting the achievements of their predecessors at stake. Then followed the disorderly speeches, accompanied by cries, among which were "Down with the Communists!". By the end of the day the rally was over... Kalinin left..."

At the same time, employees of the Special Department and the Kronstadt Department of the Revolutionary Military Tribunal left the fortress without hindrance through the Citadel Gate with weapons. N. N. Kuzmin and P. D. Vasiliev remained, hoping to turn the tide at a meeting of 500 delegates from ships, coastal units, and Kronstadt factories and trade unions. However, they were obstructed and at the end of the meeting, along with other communists, they were arrested. Here is what Petrichenko recalled at this meeting:

"First of all, Kuzmin, and then Chairman of the Kronsovet Vasiliev, asked for the floor. In their speeches, they did not show any reconciliation towards the assembly. All the time they operated with figures on economic issues, warned and threatened the assembly. All this had an unpleasant effect on the assembly, and it demanded their arrest. Notes of a clearly provocative nature began to arrive at the presidium in large numbers ... From the places they began to report information one more fantastic than the other. Who did this, I still do not know, but the fact is that this had its results, and it became impossible to persuade the meeting. Finally one sailor runs up to the presidium and starts shouting: "What are you bargaining for here? The Communists are not sleeping, and Kronstadt is already surrounded by cavalry! Measures for self-defense are needed!" There was a real panic ... The presidium was hastily authorized to assume the duties of the "Provisional Revolutionary Committee" ... I made the orders ... The Rubicon was crossed ... The unexpected for all of us happened. The task before the Revolutionary Committee was: The Revolutionary Committee ordered: "All comrades remain in their places and honestly fulfill their duty to the Motherland. " The government message spoke of a White Guard rebellion in Kronstadt, allegedly led by the head of the artillery of the fortress, former General A. R. Kozlovsky. with an invocation:

"Everyone, everyone, everyone!

All power passed into the hands of the Provisional Revolutionary Committee without a single shot being fired.

The working people of Kronstadt decided no longer to succumb to the rhetoric of the Communist Party, which supposedly calls itself representatives of the people, but in reality it turns out the other way around.

Comrades! Do not believe the words of the autocratic commissars who assert that a staff of white officers headed by General Kozlovsky is operating in Kronstadt. This is a blatant lie.

The Kronstadt comrades suggest that you immediately join Kronstadt and establish a strong connection, by joint and other efforts to achieve the long-awaited freedom.

Ermolaev testifies that on March 5, representatives of the revolutionary committees of all parts of the garrison gathered at Petropavlovsk, and Petrichenko made a speech to them, where he fairly objectively outlined

established position:

"Brothers, all of you probably read in the newspapers of March 3 that our demands were regarded as a "counter-revolutionary White Guard rebellion." From this we must conclude that the information of Mikhail Ivanovich Kalinin was not objective. of the government, this means that this is White Guardism and counter-revolution, despite the fact that the revolutionary masses, devoted to Soviet power, demand to alleviate the lot of the peasantry. And the simplest way to explain the protest is by the actions of the generals, Cadets and other imperialists. do next."

We decided to send a delegation to Petrograd to settle the matter amicably. But the other side was already preparing for the military suppression of the uprising.

As early as March 2, the Council of Labor and Defense introduced a state of siege in Petrograd and the province, transferring full power to the Petrograd Defense Committee. Troops were drawn to the blockaded Kronstadt, and the families of the rebellious sailors were detained in the capital as hostages. The Kronstadters, in turn, declared Kuzmin, Vasiliev and other arrested supporters of the Bolsheviks hostages. During the days of the uprising in the fortress, there was a mass exodus from the party: more than 900 people left its ranks.

On March 2, a government message appeared, signed by Lenin and Trotsky:

"On February 28 of this year, unrest began on the ship Petropavlovsk in Kronstadt. A Black Hundred-Socialist-Revolutionary resolution was adopted (?! I wonder who came up with the idea to combine the incompatible, to harness the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Union of the Russian People into one chariot ", Vladimir Ilyich or Lev Davidovich? - B.S.). Former General Kozlovsky with three officers, whose names have not yet been established, openly acted as rebels."

On March 5, the day when the re-elections of the Kronstadt Soviet were supposed, Tukhachevsky arrived in Petrograd, leading the 7th Army, which by the end of the fighting had reached 45 thousand people. The Bolsheviks were very afraid that after the rebellion in Kronstadt, events in Petrograd would develop according to the same scenario as in February 1917: bread riots, demonstrations, soldiers and sailors going over to the side of the demonstrators and overthrowing the government. Therefore, they wanted to crush the uprising in the bud and quickly, even before the start of the Tenth Party Congress, which opened on March 8. Lenin, Trotsky and other leaders hurried

Tukhachevsky. On March 6, a peaceful delegation of the Revolutionary Committee of four people, headed by the sailor Vershinin, heading for Petrograd, was arrested and subsequently shot. On the evening of March 7, artillery shelling of the fortress began. Fired 5,000 rounds. And at dawn the next day, 3,000 red cadets went to storm Kronstadt as a shock detachment (in total, 20,000 people were concentrated for the offensive). The calculation was made that the rebels would be taken by surprise, that they would not have time to organize a reliable defense immediately after the heated rallies, that they would be afraid to fight the Soviet troops and capitulate without bringing the matter to bloodshed. Lenin was so confident of success that on March 8, in a political report to the congress, he declared:

"I do not yet have the latest news from Kronstadt, but

I doubt that this uprising, which quickly revealed to us the familiar figure of the White Guard generals, will be liquidated in the coming days, if not in the next few hours.

But in the "next hours" did not work.

With artillery fire from battleships and forts, the Kronstadters repulsed the attack. The cadets advancing without camouflage robes were an excellent target on the fragile spring ice. Almost all participants in the assault were killed or wounded.

In order to stop the expression of sympathy for the rebels and induce the vacillating units to go on the attack, reprisals were launched. Already on March 7, the first two were shot - the telegraph operator Gerasimov, for having received a telephone message about the uprising in Kronstadt, he hesitated to report it to the authorities, and Anna Kozhevnikova, a soldier of the 4th artillery division, for spreading "provocative rumors of a counter-revolutionary nature." "Dissemination" consisted in the fact that the unfortunate woman shared with her friend, the political instructor's wife, the last news:

"Oh, what is happening now in the fortress, you won't believe it. Many communists have decided to leave the party, statements are being carried in batches. Rumor has it that the rebellious sailors will crack down on members of the RCP."

By the way, the Kronstadters did not begin to crack down on the Communists. But in Petrograd and its environs, the flywheel of repression was gaining momentum.

The next day, March 8, they took on the naval division located in Oranienbaum, which supported the demands of the Kronstadters, and the 187th separate brigade, as well as the 91st regiment stationed in Sestroretsk, which refused to participate in the offensive. Then the turn came to other unreliable parts. Three cadets were shot for "deserting" during an unsuccessful assault. Seven more were shot for fleeing to Petrograd. On March 14 and 15, 74 Red Army soldiers were shot. Having cheered up the troops in this way, Tukhachevsky decided to re-storm the fortress. Prior to this, on March 11, the Kronstadters sent another delegation to Petrograd, headed by the sailor of the "Sevastopol" Perepelkich. She suffered the fate of the first. In the meantime, on March 8, Lenin announced his decision to raise at the congress the question of replacing the surplus appropriation with a tax in kind and allowing free trade. On March 15, the corresponding resolution was adopted by the congress.

The Kronstadters came to the conclusion that it was pointless to continue resistance, since the main demands of the rebels were satisfied. But the arrest of the second delegation showed that it would not be possible to end the matter peacefully.

Ivan Ermolaev recalled:

"Information coming from the mainland said that large units led by Army Commander Tukhachevsky continued to arrive in the Oranienbaum area. All this convinced us even more that, rejecting all negotiations, Trotsky, Zinoviev and Voroshilov firmly decided to deal with us with armed force. To such fratricidal the garrison could not go to the massacre. Instead of serious armed resistance, it was decided to leave for Finnish territory, about which the Revolutionary Committee agreed with the government of Finland. "

Before the start of the uprising in Kronstadt, there were about 27 thousand military sailors and Red Army soldiers. Most decided to stay

in his native city and not to resist the Soviet troops. Approximately a third of the garrison was about to leave for Finland, leaving a small rearguard of the most experienced naval marines to cover the retreat. On March 14, preparations for the retreat began. On the 16th, the covering detachments took up positions on the battleships and forts, and on the night of March 16-17, the withdrawal to the Finnish coast began.

In the meantime, 300 delegates from the Tenth Party Congress poured into the units prepared for the attack on Kronstadt in order to stop any hesitation among the Red Army soldiers and lead them into battle. Tukhachevsky gave a combat order:

"On the night of March 16-17, take the fortress of Kronstadt with a swift assault ... Open artillery fire at 2 pm on March 16 and continue it until the evening ... Start the movement of the columns of the Northern group at 3 o'clock, the Southern group at 4 o'clock March 17 ... The groups will limit themselves to occupying the most obstructing forts ... Appoint the commander of the Southern Group a general commander in charge of leading troops in street battles in Kronstadt ... Observe the full accuracy of the movement of the columns ... "

The commander also ordered the use of chemical shells for shelling battleships and the fortress, not at all worrying that civilians of the fortress city would inevitably suffer from it. However, due to unsuitable weather conditions - thick fog, which sharply reduced the effectiveness of toxic substances, this time the gas attack had to be abandoned. And the proximity of Finland did not allow to turn around as it should: suddenly the gases reach the Finnish territory, you will not be afraid of a scandal. In addition, representatives of the International Red Cross, which supplied the besieged with food, were in the fortress. They, too, could become unwanted witnesses. As a result, Tukhachevsky managed to use chemical weapons only a few months later, during the suppression of the Tambov uprising. But the very idea of poisoning the rebels with gases was born, as we see, even near Kronstadt.

In the morning of March 17, the Kronstadters, despite heavy artillery fire from the mainland, managed to repel the attacks of the Soviet troops. Twelve-inch battleship guns at break

they made wide polynyas in the ice, which were immediately covered with a thin ice crust. Many attackers fell into them and went to the bottom like a stone. The Red Army also suffered heavy losses from shrapnel and rifle and machine-gun fire. Tukhachevsky thought to control the actions of the attackers by telephone, but in the very first minutes of the battle, the telephone wires were broken by shrapnel. So the commander had to be content with the role of a spectator. True, heavy fog prevented the observation of the battle. Only in the evening the forward detachments of the attackers broke into Kronstadt. At 2150 hours, Tukhachevsky gave a combat order for the complete capture of the fortress, Kotlin Island and the Reef battery. They were ordered "today to finally take possession of the city and introduce an iron order in it ... When operating in the city, widely use artillery in street combat." In addition, the army commander sent a secret telegram about what to do with the defeated enemy: "It is cruel to deal with the rebels, shooting without any regret ... do not get carried away with prisoners."

By the morning of March 18, the bulk of the rebels crossed over to

Finnish coast. The defense of Kronstadt was stopped in an organized manner. Some cover units also managed to escape to Finland, while others surrendered to the mercy of the victors. But the latter were not inclined to mercy. Official figures speak of more than a thousand dead Kronstadters, more than two thousand wounded and two and a half thousand captured armed sailors. The losses of the Soviet troops are called much more precisely - 527 killed and 3285 wounded. It turns out that during the assault on Kronstadt, the Red Army lost one and a half times more wounded than the defenders of the fortress, but half as many as killed. But that doesn't happen. During the assault on such a fortified position as Kronstadt, and even in conditions when it was necessary to attack head-on, on ice, on which there was no place for the attackers to hide, the attacking side must suffer losses many times greater than those of the defending side. It can be said with certainty that the Red Army really did not stand on ceremony and that most of the more than a thousand dead Kronstadters were shot after surrendering on the spot without trial or investigation.

Many were later judged. In total, in 1921-1922, 10,001 people were involved in cases of the Kronstadt rebellion. Of these, 2103 were sentenced to death, 1451 were acquitted, the rest were sent to prisons and camps. In the West, the number of 18,000 killed in battle and shot after the surrender of the participants in the uprising in Kronstadt often appears. Obviously, it was obtained by simply subtracting from the total number of the garrison on the eve of the uprising of 26,887 people the number of Kronstadters who ended up in Finland - more than 8 thousand people. The actual scope of the repressions was somewhat smaller. But it is also impressive, especially when you consider that, even according to official and, most likely, inflated data, no more than 4.5 thousand of those who offered armed resistance to the Red Army fell into the hands of the Soviet government, along with the wounded. So the overwhelming majority of the convicts were sailors, soldiers and just civilians who did not directly participate in the hostilities. Many Kronstadters were sentenced to death for the fact that, although they did not participate in the battle, they offered cartridges to the defenders, for "counter-revolutionary agitation", for carrying out the usual guard duty during the mutiny or for forming flying sanitary detachments to help the wounded ...

The rebels did not shoot Kuzmin, Vasiliev and others.

arrested communists, although they decided to execute them on March 18, after the start of the Soviet offensive. But no one wanted to carry out the sentence. The arrested disarmed the convoy and joined the units of the 7th Army that broke into the city. Kuzmin even managed to receive the second Order of the Red Banner for participating in the assault, for "fighting in the ranks of the troops as a Red Army soldier, raising the spirit and offensive impulse of the units, which contributed to our success." This submission was signed by Tukhachevsky. commissar, who met on the Western Front: there, in the last weeks of the Polish campaign, Nikolai Nikolayevich served as commander of the 12th Army. Tukhachevsky became a member of the Kuzmins' house and won the heart of Nikolai Nikolayevich's wife, the prettiest Yulia Ivanovna. She left her husband, openly became Tukhachevsky's mistress who arranged for her and his daughter Svetlana an apartment in Moscow.

accusations of espionage became the prologue to the fall of Tukhachevsky. But none of this in March 1921, the future marshal to foresee, of course, could not.

Tukhachevsky left Kronstadt satisfied. On March 23, at the railway station in Smolensk, he was met at the head of the cadets of the Smolensk infantry courses who participated in the assault by garrison units built by tapestries. There were also students of the Smolensk militarized state polytechnical institute dressed in Red Army uniforms on the square. As one of them recalled:

"We came here straight from class, with books under our arms and behind our belts, with T-shirts and paper rolls. From the point of view of even the most indulgent construction worker, the student ranks looked ... not brilliant. Most of the students wore Red Army overcoats hanging like skirts."

But the conqueror of Kronstadt was in a cheerful mood. He took a look at the students lined up for the parade, jokingly compared them to the Scottish guards in the famous kilt skirts from the equally famous Scottish woolen fabric: "What are the Scottish arrows?" I no longer remembered the dead sailors. As he did not remember a few years later, when he fervently proved to his sister-in-law, Lydia Zagorskaya (aka Feldman, aka Nord), that the pangs of conscience for Kronstadt

does not experience.

The conversation arose after one political worker, whom the memoirist calls Zapolsky, an ardent supporter of Trotsky, who was already persecuted at that time, stated:

"If Tukhachevsky had not let the disguised units on the ice at night, which unexpectedly surrounded the fortress by morning, then Kronstadt would have resisted for a long time and undoubtedly received the support of not only the St. Petersburg workers, but also the proletariat of other cities in the country. And under the pressure of public opinion, the authorities would have been forced make concessions. The people would greatly benefit from this, and there would not be such a cruel reprisal against the surrendered rebels. "

The dearest Zapolsky preferred to forget that under the very first appeal to the Kronstadters demanding to immediately lay down their arms was signed not only by Tukhachevsky, but also by Trotsky, who was the real author of this formidable text:

"I order:

All those who have raised their hands against the socialist Fatherland must immediately lay down their arms.

The stubborn ones should be disarmed and handed over to the hands of the Soviet authorities.

Arrested commissars and other representatives of the authorities should be released immediately.

Only those who have unconditionally surrendered can count on the mercy of the Soviet Republic.

At the same time, I give the order to prepare everything for the defeat of the rebellion and the rebels with an iron hand ... ".

Trotsky and Tukhachevsky, in fact, at that moment were not worried about easing the situation of the workers and the people as a whole, but about the preparation of a brutal reprisal against the rebels by the hands of the Chekists and trustworthy Red Army units.

Lydia Nord was shocked by Zapolsky's "creepy and colorful story" about Kronstadt, after which Tukhachevsky introduced himself to her

"drenched from head to toe in blood and ... a monster." She went to her favorite lyceum church in Tsarskoe Selo to order a memorial service "for all the innocently killed." She also tried to pray for the salvation of the soul of "the servant of God Michael", but "felt such alienation and disgust towards this sinful servant that the words of prayer did not come from the heart ...".

When, at the meeting, the sister-in-law told Tukhachevsky everything she thought about his role in the suppression of the Kronstadt uprising, Mikhail Nikolayevich experienced a strong emotional shock. Let's again give the floor to Lydia Nord:

"He was dumbfounded. Then his hands clenched into fists, a vein poured on his forehead and his face became terrible. "Here he is - the real one," flashed through my brain and I threw him with hatred:

- You can kill me too - one of your victims will be more!

His face turned grey. He yanked the collar of the jacket with his hand and pulled out the hook "with meat". Then he fumbled like a blind man on the table with his hands and, finding a decanter, poured water into a glass and drank it in one gulp.

It took a long time before he spoke. The voice was somewhat hoarse.

- You would be worth killing if you came to this with your mind, but you, like a gramophone record, convey other people's words. There are a lot of bastards ... I'm not going to justify myself to you. I can only say that I don't feel sorry for any of the executed, for whom you prayed so fervently. I myself did not judge and did not shoot, but if I had to, I would do that too (Yesenin's "I did not shoot the unfortunate in dungeons" to Tukhachevsky, apparently, was absolutely alien. - B.S.). And then, as now, I would not have felt any sin in my soul ... - and, smiling evilly, he continued: - But although you, venerable "Saint Cecilia", and

after serving twenty requiems for them, I doubt very much that even one of these souls would go to heaven. After all, you must remember how mercilessly the sailors acted during the revolution! Who went from house to house with a search, robbed, raped, brutally shooting the captured, not even bringing them to emergency situations ... How brutally the sailors dealt with the officers of the fleet, with officers in general, and even with those old honored soldiers who had the courage to defend their former superiors...

In this drunken, bloody revelry, and even with the immoderate use of cocaine, most of the sailors finally turned into bandits. In people who are no longer able to live a normal life, without debating and blood ... When they began to be restrained, they yelled: "Brothers - what we fought for !!!"

No, I don't feel sorry for this bastard. They will never become heroes in my eyes - neither revolutionary nor counter-revolutionary ... Ask the one who told you all this, if it is a man, how did he react to the sailors' reprisals and lynching? The most disgusting thing is that now, only because the sailors revolted against the authorities, they are considered "heroes" and are almost considered saints - and even those whose relatives and friends they torn to pieces during the revolution ... or mocked ... But I, having received an order to suppress the rebellion, of course, did not feel much pleasure from this assignment, because I understood why the party opted for me - this is their special tactic, but when I was drawing up a plan, I was afraid of one thing: that in the battle my soldiers and commanders may die ... And I regard each fighter more than fifty cocaine

"brothers"...

Having said this, Mikhail Nikolaevich walked around the room several times, pulling his belt as he went. His face began to take on an earthy hue again. Then he poked a cigarette into the ashtray and stopped in front of me. His tightly clenched lips parted, but he said nothing, only shook his head several times, and suddenly grabbed a dining chair, lifted it and slammed it on the floor so that it crumbled ... Then he quickly left the room, slamming the door hard.

Well, we have a classic way of self-justification for all executioners at all times: to present their victims as the offspring of the human race, to transfer responsibility for the excesses of individual "brothers" to the entire Kronstadt garrison, although, for example, many sailors were called up for service after 1917 and to really had nothing to do with the wildest reprisals against officers in Kronstadt and Helsingfors. But the very state of Tukhachevsky during an unpleasant conversation with his sister-in-law proves better than any words: the young commander of Kronstadt recalled not with a clear conscience. Of course, Tukhachevsky was, if not a great, then an outstanding commander, and the Kronstadters were far from angels, but why break chairs? By the way, a lot of Tukhachevsky's subordinates were killed during two assaults, they were not really taken care of, especially during the first, poorly prepared attack. But why exactly he was sent to suppress the Kronstadt rebellion, Tukhachevsky understood quite correctly. The authorities wanted not only to use his military leadership and organizational abilities of the former second lieutenant, but also to reliably guarantee his future loyalty with the blood of yesterday's "beauty and pride of the revolution", the Baltic sailors, representatives of the mass that could potentially elevate the new Bonaparte to the heights of power.

The next step in Tukhachevsky's career was the suppression of the Tambov peasants - another test of loyalty to the Bolshevik leadership. Perhaps this time the army commander drowned out the pangs of conscience, convincing himself that the peasants deserved a severe punishment already by burning down the estates and sadistically cracking down on the landowners and their families. True, as we have already seen, the Tukhachevsky family with its peasants lived in perfect harmony and was not subjected to any violence after the revolution. Yes, and Mikhail Nikolayevich, while still in captivity, advocated the confiscation of landowners' lands. But he certainly was not a supporter of the physical destruction of the former owners of noble nests. And about the peasant atrocities in Smolensk and Penza, and in the rebellious Tambov, and in many other Russian provinces, there was plenty known about Tukhachevsky's relatives. So the reason for the moral justification in their own eyes of the cruel suppression of the "rebellious mob" was to invent

not difficult.

Mikhail Nikolaevich was proud of the Kronstadt operation. He claimed:

"The attack of the forts by the cadets is almost unparalleled in its courage, onslaught and unity of action. You need to see what the Kronstadt forts were - these sheer masses of reinforced concrete, equipped with rich anti-assault artillery and machine guns and densely surrounded by barbed wire. In this assault, the cadets showed how to fight ".

But were the merits of Tukhachevsky and his subordinate troops in Kronstadt so great? And anyway, what happened there? Soviet newspapers assured from the first day that we were dealing with a pre-arranged counter-revolutionary rebellion led by General Kozlovsky and other former officers. The Bolsheviks were not embarrassed that the military experts formed the defense headquarters only a few days after the start of events, when the threat of storming the fortress became real, and then they worked under the complete control of the Revolutionary Committee, without showing any independence. Most importantly, the conspirators turned out to be just clinical idiots. There is no need to wait 4-5 weeks for the ice to break. Then the waters of the Gulf of Finland will make the fortress inaccessible to land attacks, and, conversely, the Kronstadt battleships will be able to approach Petrograd and, with their twelve-inch guns, make the government much more susceptible to sailor demands. However, for some reason, the eccentric conspirators raised the sailors to revolt just when the ice was still strong enough to withstand the Red Army units thrown against Kronstadt. Moreover, Petrchenko and his comrades categorically rejected the proposals of the officers from the defense headquarters to act offensively, to attack Oranienbaum and Petrograd in order to win over the wavering garrisons.

All riddles will be solved if we accept the only correct explanation. The Kronstadt uprising was not a rebellion aimed at overthrowing Soviet power, but a spontaneous armed demonstration, which had the goal of obtaining certain concessions from the authorities. Therefore, the Kronstadters easily repulsed the first assault on the almost impregnable fortress and did not repulse the second. After the main demand for the abolition of the surplus was satisfied, the continuation of the armed struggle lost its meaning for them. However, Lenin, Trotsky and others did not intend to end things in peace.

The Kronstadters, like the Tambov peasants later, needed to be roughly punished so that others would be discouraged. Hence the senseless assault, and the executions of hundreds and thousands of those who surrendered. Although it was enough to wait a day until those who wished to reach the Finnish coast, and the remnants of the garrison would certainly have surrendered without a single shot.

So this time Tukhachevsky did not need any special military art. Nevertheless, the Politburo appreciated the abilities of the young punitive commander. He showed the ability to quickly organize an army offensive, almost for the first time in history, attacking a sea fortress with infantry on ice. In addition, Tukhachevsky showed firmness and determination in the fight against those who had fought with him yesterday against the white generals. Such a person could be entrusted without fear to act against any external or internal enemy. The memory of the Warsaw disaster was gradually erased. The suppression of the largest peasant uprising in Russia in the Tambov province helped Tukhachevsky to finally make amends for the consequences of the failure on the Vistula.

"Severely and mercilessly": suffocating gases for Tambov peasants

We turn to the most shameful page of Tukhachevsky's military career. At the end of April 1921, Mikhail Nikolayevich was appointed commander of the troops of the Tambov province, whose task was to suppress as soon as possible a powerful peasant uprising led by a former village teacher, Social Revolutionary A. S. Antonov. The appointment was

furnished in an original way. Trotsky's deputy E. M. Sklyansky wrote to Lenin:

"I would consider it desirable to send Tukhachevsky to suppress the Tambov uprising. Lately there has been no improvement there, and even worsening in places. This appointment has a somewhat large effect. Especially abroad. What is your opinion?"

On this note, the chairman of the Council of People's Commissars imposed the wisest resolution:

"I propose to appoint him without publicity in the Center, without publication."

It was inconvenient to send the victor of Kolchak and Denikin, who almost brought the dubious happiness of Sovietization to the proletariat and other classes of Western Europe, according to all the rules of military science, to crush some kind of peasant uprising there on Red Army bayonets. It was embarrassing to admit to Europe that the almost unarmed Tambov peasants were more terrible for the Soviet government than the army of white generals generously supplied by the Entente (at the best of times) with weapons and equipment. It turns out that the Bolsheviks are no less afraid of peasant anger than they are of Denikin, Kolchak and Wrangel! That is why they did not announce the appointment of Tukhachevsky in the central newspapers: so as not to disturb the people and abroad in vain. As has long been customary in Russia, Lenin and his comrades were very sensitive to what the European "Princess Marya Aleksevna" would say.

The Politburo of the Central Committee of the RCP (6) decided on April 27

"appoint Tukhachevsky as the sole commander of the troops in the Tambov district, making him responsible for the liquidation of gangs

Antonova. Give a period of one month for liquidation. Do not allow any interference in his affairs ...".

After Kronstadt, the commander was completely trusted. Forces under the command of Tukhachevsky were collected serious. The number of Soviet troops (with rears) exceeded 120 thousand people. Directly on the front line against the rebels, 53 thousand fighters, reinforced by 9 artillery brigades, 4 armored trains, 6 armored vehicles, 5 armored vehicles and 2 air squadrons, acted against the rebels. The Red Army did not know the lack of ammunition. 63 guns, 463 machine guns, 8 aircraft and 6 armored vehicles, Antonovites, numbering 18 thousand fighters, could oppose 5 guns and 25 machine guns, for which there was a catastrophic lack of shells and cartridges. The rebels, despite the sympathetic attitude on the part of the population and their ability to quickly disperse, avoiding the blow, turn into peaceful land-pastors for a while, in order to then re-assemble in armed detachments and resume the fight, were doomed and anyway, sooner or later would capitulate. But on April 20, when Tukhachevsky met with Lenin, he promised the leader of the world proletariat to crush the uprising in the shortest possible time. And he took appropriate action.

Back in February 1921, the surplus appraisal was removed from the Tambov province, which, no doubt, reduced the dissatisfaction of the peasants with the Soviet government, but in itself did not lead to an end to the uprising. Tukhachevsky's predecessor A. V. Pavlov (in 1937 he shared the fate of his successor) on March 22 inflicted a heavy defeat on two Antonov armies. The Red Army began to pursue the rebels, who were hiding, often with their families, in hard-to-reach forests and swamps, where it was not easy for regular troops to fight them.

Tukhachevsky himself valued Pavlov very highly and later, commanding the Western Military District, gave him a very high certification as a corps commander:

"Outstanding worker. Possesses brilliant operational thinking. Firm and courageous character. Hardy in field life, sincerely revolutionary-minded and devoted to Soviet power."

However, in Moscow they still could not forget the fear that the Antonov uprising had caught up with, threatening to spread to other provinces, and they mistakenly believed that the "sincerely revolutionary-minded commander" had not yet broken the ability of the Tambov rebels to take active actions. Therefore, they decided to replace Pavlov with the one who pacified the rebellious Kronstadt in two weeks.

On May 12, on the day of his arrival in Tambov, Tukhachevsky issued extermination order No. 130. A popular statement of this order was published on May 17 by the Plenipotentiary Commission of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee for Combating Banditry in the Tambov Province, titled "Order to members of bandit gangs." It said:

"1. The Workers' and Peasants' government decided to put an end to robbery and robbery in the Tambov province as soon as possible and restore honest labor in it.

2. The Workers' and Peasants' Power has sufficient military forces in the Tambov province. All who raise arms against Soviet power will be exterminated.

You, members of bandit gangs, are left with one of two options: either die like mad dogs, or surrender to the mercy of Soviet power.

3. In the name of the Workers' and Peasants' Government, the Plenipotentiary Commission orders you:

Immediately stop the resistance of the Red Army, robbery and robbery, report to the nearest headquarters of the Red Army, hand over your weapons and hand over your leaders.

5. Those who hand over their weapons, bring their leaders, and generally assist the Red Army in catching the bandits, will be subject to a widespread conditional sentence and, in special cases, complete forgiveness.

b. According to the order of the Red Command for No. 130 and the "Rules on taking hostages", published by the Plenipotentiary Commission on May 12, the family of the evader is taken as hostages, and the property is seized.

The family is kept in a concentration camp for two weeks. If the bandit appears at the headquarters of the Red Army and surrenders his weapon, the family and property are released from arrest. If the bandit does not appear within two weeks, the family is sent to the North for forced labor, and the property is distributed to the peasants who suffered from the bandits.

7. All who provide this or that assistance to the bandits are subject to severe personal and property liability before the court of the Revolutionary Military Tribunal as accomplices of treason against the working people. Only by immediate repentance, the issuance of leaders and weapons, they can earn forgiveness.

Gang members!

The Plenipotentiary Commission declares to you:

Your names are known to Cheka. Either you or your family and property will be taken. Give up!"

The appeal of the Permanent Commission to the army communists (there were many of them, as evidenced by the 10,000th circulation of the appeal) of May 20 aimed them at the merciless liquidation of the uprising:

"Comrades, military communists! Great tasks have been entrusted to the shoulders of the Red Army in the Tambov province. B. S.) is a rotten thorn in the emaciated body of our laboring Republic. It must be torn out immediately with a firm and skillful hand."

By the end of May, in Tambov, Borisoglebsk, Kirsanov and other cities of the province, concentration camps for 15 thousand people were hastily set up and they tried to compile a list of "bandits" for each village. On May 28, the troops launched a decisive offensive against the rebels. By July 20, all large detachments of Antonovites were destroyed or dispersed.

Success was achieved not least thanks to some,

rather specific methods of working with the peasantry. In the villages, the bodies of Soviet power were restored, which were supposed to identify the hiding rebels and seize weapons from the population. Local residents at first refused to give any information about the Antonovites and their families and to give out their property, deposited with their neighbors. And so that the Chekists, who, contrary to the statements of the order, did not know the names of all the participants in the uprising, could not compile complete lists of the villagers, the peasants completely forgot their names and surnames when people in leather jackets addressed them. The chairman of the political commission of the Borisoglebsk military district described the operations to "clean up" villages in the period from June 2 to June 13 as follows:

"From the very first days of the operation, it was noted:

1. An exodus of families of bandits, and the property was scattered, buried in the ground, taken with them, distributed to fellow villagers and relatives. Often there were only bare walls in the care of decrepit old people.
2. Lists of the population in most cases were absent or were destroyed by the bandits: peasants did not give voluntary information because of the fear of revenge of the bandits in most cases. There were cases of arrests of entire gatherings for refusing to extradite bandits.
3. Weapons in most cases, despite thorough searches, could not be found."

Fialkovsky acknowledged that

"the attitude of the population towards the conduct of operations was very different, starting with sharply hostile and ending with the most positive, in most cases the peasantry treated the operations cautiously, expectantly, stubbornly hushing up everything related to banditry. As seen from all the reports, the peasantry was tortured, ruined, killed, afraid of representatives of the Soviet government and massacre by the bandits ...".

And Tukhachevsky came up with an excellent cure for this fear - an even greater fear of the Soviet government and the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army. In the "Instructions for the eradication of banditry", he explained the tasks to the command staff as follows:

"The work of the militia, together with the impression of the unshakable might of the Red Army, which must be instilled into the peasants by our troops, creates that stable, calming mood,

which must then be reinforced by the Soviet work of the revolutionary committees. To inspire the aforementioned respect for the strength of the Soviet government and the Red Army, the following measures must be taken:

- 1) never make impossible threats;
- 2) once made threats to be carried out steadily to the point of cruelty to the end;
- 3) to resettle the families of non-surrendering bandits to remote regions of the RSFSR;

4) to confiscate and distribute the property of these families among the Soviet-minded peasants - this will introduce stratification into the peasantry, and Soviet power can rely on this;

5) Soviet-minded peasants must be firmly and reliably protected by our forces from the assassination of bandits:

a) in general, the implementation of a pacification will immediately create many supporters of Soviet power, since banditry is both tiring and ruinous for the peasant masses;

6) Soviet-minded peasants must be drawn in every possible way into Soviet work, into organizing intelligence against bandits, etc. - this will put an insurmountable line between these peasants and bandits ... "

Tambov province, a land originally Russian, Tukhachevsky considered as a territory occupied by the Red Army. So he wrote: "...military actions to carry out the occupational method of struggle against bandits"; "We usually call this period of struggle the occupation." But the peasants still did not want to stratify and become the mainstay of Soviet power, they did not give out the rebels, their families and property. And the threats had to be carried out, otherwise what respect for the authorities and the army could be. And on June 11, the most formidable order No. 171 was issued, signed by the chairman of the Plenipotentiary Commission V. A. Antonov-Ovseenko, the commander of the troops M. N. Tukhachevsky, the chairman of the provincial executive committee A. S. Lavrov and the secretary of the provincial party committee B. A. Vasiliev. Now we have moved from words to deeds:

"..In order to finally eradicate the SR-bandit roots and in addition to the previously issued orders, the Plenipotentiary Commission of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee orders:

1. Citizens who refuse to give their names should be shot on the spot without trial.

2. To the villages in which weapons are hidden, by the authority of the political commissions and district political commissions, announce orders to seize hostages and shoot them if they do not hand over their weapons.

3. If a hidden weapon is found, shoot the senior worker in the family on the spot without trial.

4. The family in whose house the bandit has taken refuge is subject to arrest and expulsion from the province, its property is confiscated, the senior worker in the family is shot on the spot without trial.

5. Families hiding family members or property of bandits are considered as bandits and the senior worker of this family is shot on the spot without trial.

b. In the event of the flight of the bandit's family, their property should be distributed among the peasants loyal to Soviet power, and the abandoned houses should be dismantled or burned.

7. This order is to be enforced severely and ruthlessly."

And they did it, how they did it. Some only sent to others

There were over 70,000 people in the province. Among them were especially many women, children and the elderly. The unfortunate were starved to death in concentration camps, including near Moscow. Ragged, emaciated children climbed through the garbage heaps in search of at least something to eat. The old Narodnaya Volya Vera Figner, one of the leaders of the Political Red Cross, wrote in September 1921 to the Revolutionary Tribunal of the Republic that out of 364 peasants deported to camps near Moscow as hostages for relatives who were in gangs, 29 people were old people over 60 years old, and 158 - minors, a third of which are under 10 years old, five are generally breastfed babies.

"All these people," Vera Nikolaevna was horrified, "arrived in Moscow in the most deplorable state - ragged, half-naked and so hungry that small children rummage in cesspools to find some piece that could be eaten ... The political Red Cross petitions for mitigation of the fate ... of the hostages and for their return to their homeland in their villages ... "

But it was the voice of one crying in the wilderness. How many deportees died of hunger, cold and disease, no one will ever know. As well as how many people were tortured in the Tambov province itself. Later, Tukhachevsky, in one of his articles, analyzing the experience of suppressing the Antonov uprising, noted:

"When the disintegrated gangs, after a collision with the red units, returned to their village, then here they ran into a purge and fell into the hands of the occupying units. Mutual responsibility, which was carried out in addition to this, namely, the imprisonment of the families of the bandits who did not appear in concentration camps, quickly led to disintegration among the peasants - as soon as they saw the methodical and precise work of the Soviet government, continuously accompanied by the destruction of more and more bandits and the extraction of bandits from the villages, their mood began to fluctuate. They began to become in opposition to banditry and even support Soviet power by pointing out bandits in hiding and warning of gang raids. In order to further shape this stratification, in order to create an uncompromising environment for banditry in the countryside, a peasant intelligence service was introduced, which was supposed to warn the Red troops and the police in an organized manner about the impending danger ... Gradually, under the influence of the cleansing of the volosts and their Sovietization, under the influence of the defeat of the bandits and the harsh punishments of the stubborn, and also under the influence of examples of the liberation of the bandits who came and voluntarily handed over their weapons, the decomposition of banditry begins. The number of killed, wounded and captured bandits is decreasing in comparison with the bandits caught by the Chekist order in the villages and voluntarily surrendered.

The young commander also forgot to mention the executions of unarmed hostages who had never taken part in the uprising. Mainly thanks to this inhuman means, prohibited by international conventions on the rules of warfare, it was possible to create in the villages an "irreconcilable environment for banditry" and to force the peasant masses to "support" Soviet power.

Reports from the political fives who led the purges in the villages came daily to Tukhachevsky and Antonov-Ovseenko. Here are just two examples:

"On June 26, during the occupation of the village of Tugolunovo, hostages were taken by a specially organized political five and the population was asked to immediately hand over the bandits and weapons. After a two-hour period, 5 hostages were shot before the eyes of the population. The execution made a strong impression on the population, the peasantry immediately began to extradite the bandits. In 2 days, on June 26, 27, bandits without weapons - 231, with weapons - 8, deserters - 99, bandits - 68, deserters - 88 voluntarily appeared. well-known bandit leader Boguslavsky.

Sometimes, for not just a "strongest", but a "stunning impression" on the peasants, more hostages had to be shot than in Tugolunov. So,

"On June 27, after the occupation of the village of Ostroukhovka, Vasilyevsky volost, an organized group of five announced to the population that they had surrendered weapons and handed over bandits, 30 hostages were taken. At 19 o'clock, 10 hostages were shot for failure to comply with the order to surrender weapons. one voice declared that they would go with the whole village and present all the weapons: 5 bandits were immediately issued. The operation continues. The peasants are zealous in search of weapons and bandits."

Try not to show up here! Immediately, either you yourself or someone close to the wall will be put. Sometimes, in especially stubborn villages, several batches of hostages were shot before the peasants became "conscious." For example, in the village of Andrianovka, 16 people were shot in two steps until they aroused hatred for the Antonovites among the inhabitants. And in neighboring Kulyabovka, a terrible procedure, which killed 23 people, had to be carried out three times. But they began to be afraid to shelter the rebels and allow their detachments into the villages, since this threatened the inhabitants with inevitable death. The Antonovites now had to forcefully obtain food and a place to sleep. The peasantry found themselves between two fires, and between them and the rebels finally lay the line that Tukhachevsky spoke about. Therefore, on June 17, by order No. 178, he demanded the creation of self-defense units in villages and villages to fight Antonov's supporters:

"In the event of the appearance of gangs and their raid on settlements, the local population is obliged to resist, destroying the bandits by all possible means and immediately reporting their appearance to the nearest military unit or revolutionary committee. Failure to resist the bandits and untimely reporting of the appearance of such ... will be considered as , complicity with bandits with all the ensuing consequences".

In a word, voluntary-compulsory self-defense units are under threat of being shot. Wherever you throw, everywhere is a wedge. But the peasantry sees that the power now really belongs to the Reds. So you have to fight the bandits, do not let them into the villages, take the property of those who are hiding in the forests, fight the Antonovites with weapons in your hands. And more and more rebels are forced to surrender to the mercy of the victors. Until May 1, 1921, 7 thousand people laid down their arms, and from May to August - another 15 thousand.

On June 23, 1921, in order No. 116, Antonov-Ovseenko and Tukhachevsky summarized the experience of the most effective purges and, having improved

previous methods, suggested the best way to carry out the operation:

"Especially bandit-minded volosts are outlined, and representatives of the district political commission, the special department, the military tribunal department and the command, along with the units intended for purges, go there. Upon arrival at the place, the volost is cordoned off, 60-100 of the most prominent persons are taken a state of siege is introduced. Exit and entry into the volost must be prohibited for the duration of the operation. After that, a full volost meeting is held, at which the orders of the Plenipotentiary Commission of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee M No. M No. 0130 and 171 are read and the written sentence for that volost volost gathering. - B. S.). Residents are given 2 hours to hand over bandits and weapons, as well as gangster families, and the population is informed that in case of refusal to give the mentioned information, the hostages will be shot in two hours. If the population of bandits and weapons did not indicate after a two-hour period, the gathering meets again and the hostages taken in front of the population are shot, after which new hostages are taken and those who gathered at the gathering are again invited to hand over the bandits and weapons. Those who wish to do this stand separately, are divided into hundreds, and each hundred is passed for questioning through the polling commission (representatives of the Special Department and the Military Tribunal). Everyone must testify, not excused by ignorance. In case of persistence, new executions are carried out, etc. Based on the development of the material obtained from the surveys, expeditionary detachments are created with the obligatory participation of the persons who gave information and other local residents in them, and they are sent to catch bandits. At the end of the purge, the state of siege is lifted, the Revolutionary Committee is installed, and the militia is planted.

This Plenipotentiary Commission of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee orders to be accepted for steadfast execution.

Exactly the same methods, as if copying Tukhachevsky's orders, were used by the Germans during the Second World War when they fought partisans in Russia and the Balkans. It is very likely that German military thought reached the best tactics for fighting partisans on its own, without borrowing Soviet developments, and the similarity here is determined only by the deep internal kinship of the two totalitarian regimes with their contempt for human lives. Or, nevertheless, during trips to Germany, Mikhail Nikolaevich shared his Tambov experience with officers of the Reichswehr? Or maybe the Germans very carefully read Tukhachevsky's article "Struggle Against Counter-Revolutionary Uprisings", published in 1926 in the Moscow magazine "War and Revolution"? True, the execution of hostages was not directly mentioned there ... In any case, many German generals were hanged or shot for this after losing the war according to the verdicts of the Nuremberg and other tribunals. In particular, in Yugoslavia, SS General Herman Behrens was executed for this kind of purges, who was later suspected for many years of fabricating the mythical "red folder" compromising Tukhachevsky. we will be convinced that they remained unsurpassed even by the SS, but on absolutely false accusations of conspiracy and treason.

The offensive of the Soviet troops began only on May 28. In June

a significant part of the Antonovites still continued the increasingly hopeless struggle. The one-month period set by the Politburo for liquidating the uprising was not met. On June 9, Tukhachevsky had to explain to other members of the Plenipotentiary Commission of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee why this happened. There were, as usual, objective reasons:

"Banditism could not be liquidated according to the assignment of the Central Committee within a month, since the concentration of forces ended only on the twentieth of May. In addition, until very recently, the operations were not sufficiently coordinated. Now we must take into account past experience, foresee the mistakes made, first of all, carry out defeat of Antonov's new forces with one or more deafening blows.

"Deafening blows" like those that made a "strongest" and "stunning" impression on the inhabitants of Tugolunov and Ostroukhovka. But the main surprise for the peasants was yet to come.

To break the last detachments of the irreconcilable, Tukhachevsky decides to use one more means - for the first time in the civil war. To suppress the uprising, 7,000 cadets from Moscow and Orel were sent to the Tambov province for the summer training camp in 1921. Among the Oryols were military chemists, who gave the commander the idea of using poisonous substances to smoke out the rebels from hard-to-reach forests and ravines, where it was very difficult for the troops to reach. And on June 12, the "operational-secret" order number 0116 followed:

"The remnants of the defeated gangs and individual bandits who have fled from the villages where Soviet power has been restored are gathering in the forests and from there raiding civilians.

For the immediate clearing of the scaffolding, I ORDER:

1. The forests where the bandits are hiding should be cleared with poisonous gases, accurately calculated so that the cloud of suffocating gases spreads completely throughout the forest, destroying everything that was hiding in it.
2. The Artillery Inspector shall immediately submit the required number of poisonous gas cylinders and the necessary specialists to the field.
3. To the chiefs of combat sections to persistently and energetically carry out this order.
4. Report on the measures taken."

Together with Tukhachevsky, the order was signed by the chief of staff N. E. Kakurin, a colonel in the tsarist army, who had been with Mikhail Nikolayevich since the failed campaign against Warsaw. For Tambov, Nikolai Evgenievich received the Order of the Red Banner, for "outstanding organizational skills and efficiency", later became a prominent historian of the civil war, wrote a two-volume book "How the Revolution Fought". Tukhachevsky certified Kakurin very highly:

"An educated, intelligent general staff officer. An excellent chief of staff, as well as a good combatant commander, knows how to properly establish service relationships and enjoys general respect. Persistent in work. Outstanding."

But the brilliant attestation did not save, and, perhaps, even ruined the intelligent and respected General Staff officer. In June 1930, as a former officer (and, I think, as a person close to Tukhachevsky),

Kakurina was arrested on charges of participating in an alleged anti-Soviet conspiracy. He quickly broke down and, during the investigation, slandered many colleagues, for the first time declaring that Tukhachevsky was allegedly conspiratorial. Received 10 years in prison and died in custody in 1936. From those who were arrested on the basis of Kakurinsky's testimony, a thread then stretched to others, from whom they later took testimony for the fabrication of the "Tukhachevsky case" in 1937. But in the 21st year, neither Mikhail Nikolaevich nor Nikolai Evgenievich, this, in the words of the historian A.P. Nenanarokov, "a crystal-clearly honest and pure person", did not know their fates and enthusiastically prepared a chemical attack against the Tambov peasants.

On June 19, the question of the use of gases was discussed in Moscow by a commission on banditry chaired by Sklyansky. She offered:

"The Gambov command should resort to gas attacks with the greatest caution, with sufficient technical training, and only if success is fully ensured ..."

Gases are a double-edged weapon. In the event that the wind suddenly changes, their troops may also suffer from them. In addition, the Bolsheviks feared that the chemical attacks would become known abroad. This would deal a heavy blow to the prestige of the world's first proletarian state. So none of the victims of chemical warfare agents should have survived - this was what was considered "full security of success." Tukhachevsky also insisted:

"In all operations involving the use of asphyxiating gas, exhaustive measures must be taken to save the livestock in the area of the gases."

After all, cattle are the property of the Republic, but people, especially such irresponsible and simply harmful people, as in the Tambov province, are not. By the way, at the final stage of the fight against the Antonovites, Tukhachevsky showed a touching concern for the preservation of material values and communications. For example, on July 7, noting that

"The defeated bands ... take out their impotent rage on the local population, burning bridges and other national property," ordered, taking care of the peasant welfare, from the villages located near the bridges to take 5 hostages, "who in case of damage to the bridge should be immediately shot."

Technical preparations for the attack began. On June 20, the ASSISTANT to the Chief of Staff of the Red Army, the future Marshal B. M. Shaposhnikov, told Tukhachevsky:

"The Commander-in-Chief (S. S. Kamenev. - B. S.) ordered to urgently send 5 chemical teams to the Tambov provincial command with the appropriate number of gas cylinders to service combat areas."

On the same day, the artillery inspector of the Republic Scheidemann ordered:

"In view of the possible receipt of a combat mission, the chemical company located in the camps of the Oryol District must be urgently understaffed. After staffing, begin intensive training."

In any serious matter, training is needed, especially in such a serious matter as a gas attack. But time was pressing. Already on June 24, the head of the operational department of the headquarters of the troops of Tukhachevsky handed over to the head of the 6th combat sector (near the village of Inzhavino in the river valley

Vorona) to A.V. Pavlov, the order of the commander "to check the ability of the chemical company to operate with suffocating gases." And then the artillery inspector of the Tambov army S. Kasinov reported to Tukhachevsky:

"Regarding the use of gases in Moscow, I found out the following: an order for 2,000 chemical shells has been given, and these days they should arrive in Tambov. Distribution by sections: 1st, 2nd, 33rd, 4th and 5th 200 each, 6th 100".

On June 28, Kasinov and Pavlov instructed their subordinates on how these shells should be used:

"1. Chemical projectiles are used in cases where gas balloon release is impossible due to meteorological or topographical conditions, for example: in the complete absence of light wind and if the enemy has settled in forests in places difficult for gases to reach.

2. Chemical projectiles are divided into 2 types: suffocating and poisoning.

3. High-speed projectiles are used for immediate impact on the enemy, evaporate after 5 minutes.

Slow-acting ones are used to create an impassable zone, to eliminate the possibility of an enemy retreat, they evaporate after 15 minutes.

4. For actual shooting, solid ground is necessary, since shells, falling into soft soil, do not break and do not produce any effect. The area for application is better closed, overgrown with a sparse forest. In strong winds, as well as in hot weather, shooting becomes invalid.

5. It is desirable to shoot at night. Single shots should not be done, since a gas atmosphere is not created.

6. Shooting must be carried out persistently and with a large number of shells (the whole battery). The overall rate of fire is at least three rounds per minute per gun. The scope of the projectile is 20-25 square steps. Shooting should not be carried out with frequent rain and if the enemy is no more than 300-400 steps away and the wind is in our direction.

7. All personnel of the batteries must be equipped with gas masks.

We do not know whether the insurgents were fired upon with slow or fast-acting shells, we do not know whether the

weather chemical experiments with people. One can only guess that the Tambov forests, which are not too dense, and the hard Tambov soil, made the province an excellent testing ground for testing combat gases, both asphyxiating and poisonous. Obviously, in wooded, hard-to-reach areas, the gas-balloon release turned out to be ineffective and we had to wait for the delivery of chemical shells. One gets the impression that everyone who participated in the preparation of the "chemical cleansing operation" perceived it from a purely professional point of view, as a technically complex but effective military operation, without experiencing any moral anguish and pangs of conscience.

Finally, the tanks and shells arrived. On July 1, a gas engineer with a funny surname Puskov reported to Kasinov:

"I examined the gas cylinders and gas equipment that arrived at the Tambov artillery depot. At the same time, I found: cylinders with chlorine grade E 56 are in good condition, there is no gas leakage, there are spare caps for the cylinders. Technical

accessories, such as: keys, hoses, lead pipes, washers and other equipment - in good condition, in excess quantity ... "

But the technician had not yet had time to inspect the chemical shells that had arrived, since two wagons with them "were in a state of maneuvering." The main problem was the lack of gas masks. Puskov stated:

"There are no gas masks. If there are gas masks from the cylinders available in the warehouse, attacks can be made without any additional equipment, since all the equipment is available, even bandages for carrying."

Due to a delay in supplying gas masks, the first gas attack was made only on 13 July. On this day, the artillery battalion of the brigade of the Zavolzhsky Military District used up 47 chemical shells. By that time, the uprising had actually already been crushed.

By July 15, no more than 1200 rebels remained in the Tambov province, driven into the forests, hungry, almost without cartridges, posing no real threat either to the restored bodies of Soviet power, or, even more so, to the 120,000th group of troops, which they began to prepare for returning to their places. former location.

On July 16, Tukhachevsky reported to Lenin about the victory:

"As a result of methodically carried out operations over the course of 40 days, the uprising in the Tambov province was liquidated. The STK (the Union of the Labor Peasantry, which led the uprising, was under the influence of the Social Revolutionaries. - B.S.) was crushed. Soviet power was restored everywhere."

It would seem that since the uprising has been eliminated, the need for the use of chemical weapons has disappeared. But no! On August 3, the battery commander of the Belgorod artillery courses reported to the chief of artillery of the Inzhavinsky combat site:

"After receiving a combat mission, the battery at 8.00 on August 2 set out from

With. Inzhavino in the village Karai-Saltykovo, from which, after a long halt at 14.00, she spoke on the p. Kipets. Having taken a position at 16.00, the battery opened fire on the island, which is on the lake 1.5 versts northwest of the village. Kipets. 65 shrapnels, 49 grenades and 59 chemical shells were fired. After completing the task, the battery returned to Inzhavino at 20.00.

We will never know how many people died from chemical shells fired on an island in a lake near the village of Kipets and in many other places. And how many of them were women and children. Since Tukhachevsky was afraid that during the shelling of the rebels with chemical shells, livestock could suffer, which means that the rebels were hiding in the forests with their cows and sheep. Someone had to take care of the animals, therefore, at least some of the "bandits" hid from the punishers along with their families, who also became victims of the "gas sweep" according to Tukhachevsky. In at least one case, the absolute priority of the "red marshal" in world military science should be recognized: for the first time in history, he used chemical warfare agents against an unarmed civilian population. I am afraid that the glorious ancestors of Tukhachevsky, Captain Alexander Nikolaevich and Staff Captain Nikolai Nikolaevich, who served shortly after the Patriotic War of 1812 in the Life Guards Semenovskiy Regiment, would turn over in their graves if they learned about the Tambov exploits of their descendant and brother-soldier. And military necessity in

there were no more gas attacks in early August. The uprising was crushed. But Tukhachevsky and others really wanted to test chemical weapons on the Tambov peasants, to see how effective they were. After all, hopes for an early world revolution in 1921 had not yet been abandoned, and Mikhail Nikolayevich could well assume that in the future gases would be useful in pacifying the Polish, German or French peasants.

It should be noted that all these draconian measures were applied when the surplus appraisal was canceled, the NEP began in the country, and the immediate causes that caused the uprising were eliminated. Besides, it was time for the harvest. In order not to doom themselves and their families to certain death in the near future, the rebels would still be forced to stop fighting a few months after Tukhachevsky's arrival. The rebellious province was blocked, and there was no food supply there. And it is unlikely that in the conditions of the New Economic Policy, yesterday's rebels would have wanted to return to the forests after the end of the harvest campaign. But the Bolsheviks could not allow the Antonovites who did not surrender, who did not admit their defeat, to return to peaceful labor. This would mean at least partially recognizing the victory of the peasants and the defeat of the authorities. As in the case of Kronstadt, it was necessary to teach the rebels a substantive lesson, so that not only they, but also their children and grandchildren, would not rebel. For this, executions of hostages and gas attacks against those who sought refuge in the forests were needed. And the goal was achieved. A few years later, forced collectivization, the "year of the great turning point" that finished off the NEP, passed much more calmly, without uprisings on the Antonov scale, although, perhaps, even with even greater casualties. However, how many people were exterminated by the fighters of the Tambov army under the leadership of the "red Napoleon", we are unlikely to ever know. It must have been in the thousands, if not tens of thousands.

Mikhail Nikolaevich generally respected combat chemistry very much and considered it a very promising tool in a future war. In his main military-theoretical work "New Questions of War", begun ten years after the suppression of the Tambov uprising, Tukhachevsky

admiringly wrote:

"The rapid development of chemical means of combat makes it possible to suddenly use more and more new means against which old gas masks and other anti-chemical means are ineffective. And at the same time, these new chemical means do not require at all or almost no alteration or recalculation of the material part. In most cases, the projectile can be filled any chemical substance, just as sprayers can be easily adapted to any OV. Fuller, in "The Reformation of War", as one of the luminaries of the imperialists - experts in military technology, gives a very interesting description of this peculiar side of the development of chemical weapons of war. Thus, "New inventions in the field of WA technology can be immediately applied on the battlefield and, as a means of combat, can be the most sudden and demoralizing innovation for the enemy. Aviation is the most advantageous means for spraying WA. WA will be widely used by tanks and artillery."

In the book, with which the Deputy People's Commissar of Defense dreamed of acquainting thousands and thousands of Red Army commanders, he could not directly say that he had learned not only from the book of the British General John Fuller

thoughts about the breathtaking prospects of chemical weapons, but also from my own combat experience, when, for the sake of experiment and intimidation, I poisoned the Tambov peasants with gases and really became convinced how combat chemistry demoralizes the enemy. Especially when this enemy has nothing to answer or defend with.

A friend of Tukhachevsky and his first Soviet biographer, General Alexander Ivanovich Todorsky, who himself fell into a wave of repressions of the 37th year, but survived in the Stalinist camps, wrote about Mikhail Nikolayevich's participation in the suppression of the Tambov uprising:

"On the Tambov front, Tukhachevsky applied new methods of struggle. They consisted in the fact that the combat work of the troops was combined with huge political activity on the ground, was closely connected with the organs of Soviet power."

Todorsky's brochure was published in the Heroes and Feats series. Now the readers, I hope, have understood what feats Tukhachevsky accomplished on the Tambov land covered in blood and poisoned with chlorine, what was the novelty of the methods of struggle he used.

Alexander Solzhenitsyn in The Gulag Archipelago considered the quick and wrong trial and execution of Tukhachevsky and his comrades as God's punishment for what the future marshal did in the Tambov province:

"Where could they imagine then that History still knows sometimes retribution, some kind of voluptuous late justice, but chooses strange forms and unexpected performers for it. another Marusya Spiridonova was found at the station to put a bullet in his forehead - this was done by a half-educated Georgian seminarian 16 years later.

It seems to me that the Nobel laureate is wrong here. It is impossible to consider as a just retribution for the most real crimes a sentence and execution for a completely unfair,

invented accusation. However, then, in the 21st, returning from the Tambov region, Tukhachevsky had no idea what a terrible end awaited him. On the contrary, Kronstadt and Tambov seemed to have dimmed the memory of the disaster near Warsaw and raised his authority among colleagues and the political leadership. New seductive vistas opened up ahead. Tukhachevsky was the youngest of the commanders of the military districts. And his district, Western, border, was one of the largest in terms of the strength of the troops concentrated here. Mikhail Nikolaevich had every reason to hope sooner or later to stand at the head of the entire Red Army and lead it on a new, this time successful, campaign to the West.

"If you want peace, prepare for war." Mystery of Lydia Nord

For the commander of the Western Front, Tukhachevsky, who returned from the suppression of the Tambov uprising, peaceful everyday life finally came. But even before the trips to Kronstadt and Tambov, shortly after the end of the Polish campaign, an important event occurred in the personal life of Mikhail Nikolayevich: he married a second time.

Here is how the journalist Lydia Nord described the circumstances of this marriage, whose book on Tukhachevsky we have already referred to more than once:

"Not far from Smolensk, where Tukhachevsky's headquarters was then located, in the thicket of the forest stood a large wooden two-story house. A forester lived in it "with his brood," as the foresters said. The brood consisted of

five young girls. In essence, the forester himself was innocent of this abundance of girls. They were thrown into his care by his parents in order to save the girls from all the troubles brought by the revolution, and they were his relatives and cousins. The forester and his wife really took care of the entire "brood" like mother hens. The time was hard... They themselves accidentally found shelter in this remote corner of the country reared up by the revolution. True, the forester had a security mandate as a co-worker and even a permit to carry weapons, but nevertheless, his wife buried all the surviving jewelry, and even the most valuable things, under the feeder in the stable, where the horses belonging to the forestry stood, and every morning pierced the ground with a thin iron stick, to make sure no one dug them up."

Further events developed almost like in a "women's romance" or "cruel romance". A wonderful prince appeared in the forestry in the person of our hero and won the heart of one of the young ladies of the "brood", left to the care of the marshal of the nobility of one of the provinces in the center of Russia, retrained as foresters. Lydia Nord continues:

"Somehow it happened that Tukhachevsky and the head of artillery Sadlutsky went to the forestry on business. Sadlutsky spoke with the forester, and they were invited to dinner. Since then, Tukhachevsky with Sadlutsky or one began to call in quite often. - B. S.) realized that it was not conversations with her husband that were the bait for the red general, but some of the nieces.

The chosen one of Mikhail Nikolaevich was the youngest and mischievous, sixteen-year-old girl whom Nord calls Lika, the forester's favorite:

"If the older nieces were all distinguished by their beauty and ... good disposition, then the younger one was greatly lacking in both. And Anna Mikhailovna's aesthetic feelings often suffered from the appearance of eternally disheveled braids, bruises, abrasions and scratches on her face and hands, traces of horse racing and tree climbing.

The love of Mikhail Nikolaevich opened up pretty quickly. Once Anna Mikhailovna noticed how, while greeting Lika, he held her hand in his for longer than usual, and then kissed her. Anna Mikhailovna said to her husband with surprise:

"You can imagine - he became interested in Lika. I thought he travels for Anya or Vera ... I don't understand ... Well, what did he like about her?" The forester became worried: "She is just a child, he can turn her head. We must keep her at home now."

Dalype events developed rapidly. After two attempts to see Lika were thwarted by a vigilant uncle who had no sympathy for the Red General, Tukhachevsky made an official marriage proposal. Yevgeny Ivanovich replied that his niece was too young for marriage. But then Anna Mikhailovna came to the aid of the stunned commander:

"I myself got married at the age of sixteen and I think that consent does not depend on us, but on Lika." She volunteered to talk to her niece, but Tukhachevsky insisted that he would do it himself. Lidia Nord says: "He found Lika in the yard. Throwing off her mittens, she made snowballs and bombarded her older cousin, who had taken cover behind a large wooden shield standing by the barn and crying out for mercy.

Mikhail Nikolaevich, the girl was embarrassed, but mischief took over and she deftly hit the snowball in her hands at her cousin, who hastened to get out from behind the shield. Tukhachevsky grinned and took her hands, reddened from the cold, in his own: "Lika, I fell in love with you. Can I hope that you will become my wife?"

She was clearly in a hurry. Then the blood drained from her face and, tearing her hands away, she rushed somewhere ...

"I was very scared then," she later admitted to her aunt who scolded her. Anna Mikhailovna, who was watching the whole scene from the window, threw on her fur coat and hurried to save the situation: she explained that the girl was very embarrassed, promised to talk to her and asked him to come the next day for an answer. Tukhachevsky left without entering the house. But Anna Mikhailovna said goodbye to him as to a future relative.

After his departure, an unusual silence reigned in the forester's house. Yevgeny Ivanovich, after having a big talk with his wife, did not show up from his office. Lika, after a long conversation with her aunt in private, left the bedroom with reddened eyes and wandered around the house hushed, confused. The older girls, having learned from their aunt about the upcoming marriage, gasped ... Only the noise of the sewing machine broke the silence - Anna Mikhailovna managed to run to the wife of the clerk of the forestry, a former Moscow dressmaker, and she hastily remade two Anna Mikhailovna dresses taken out of the chest for the bride.

The next day there was a deal. The forester, reluctantly giving consent, made it a condition that the marriage should be church. Tukhachevsky agreed.

But the wedding had to be secret (the communist Tukhachevsky should not publicly participate in what the party called "religious prejudice." - B.S.). It was supposed to take place in a month Tukhachevsky said that this was a very long time. He can always be appointed to another post.

At first, Lika behaved aloofly with him and clung more to her uncle. But having become his man in the house as a groom, Mikhail Nikolayevich threw off his shell of calm, even a little cold politeness, with which he established a distance between himself and those around him, kept himself simple and with great tact. Without imposing on the bride, he managed to win her trust. The only intimacy he allowed himself to have with her was wrapping her long, tight braids around his neck, seriously assuring everyone that he was caught and tied by "that lasso."

The wedding took place in the evening, in the village church. When the sleigh with the bride drove up to the church, the horses suddenly began to snore and reared up, almost throwing everyone out. They entered the church - and the women screamed, and Lika sank heavily into the hands of the forester who had managed to catch her: in the church there was a coffin with the dead.

While the bride was rubbing whiskey on the porch, the dead man was dragged to the far corner of the porch and covered with something. Tukhachevsky and his witness Commander Ubovich were late and arrived when the fuss was over.

And here Nord makes an interesting observation about the behavior of the groom during the ceremony:

"When I have to hear talk about the almost blasphemy of Tukhachevsky, I involuntarily recall him when he stood under the crown ... There could be no doubt that he deeply felt the whole ceremony. One of

relatives of the bride, who with great difficulty reached the forestry from St. Petersburg with the sole purpose of preventing the wedding, softened in church to the point that, congratulating him after the wedding, she said: "You should have been the first to stand on a scarf ..."

With this colorful episode, Lydia Nord's memoir about Tukhachevsky begins, first published in full in 1957 in the Parisian magazine *Vozrozhdenie*. A separate edition of "Marshal Tukhachevsky" had to wait twenty-one years. But that part of the book, where it was told about the imaginary "fascist military conspiracy", was published back in April 1950 in the Parisian newspaper "Russian Thought". And since then, guessing has not stopped, who is hiding under the pseudonym Lydia Nord. The memoirist herself only reports about herself that she is one of the five nieces of the forester whom Tukhachevsky met, and is the sister of Mikhail Nikolayevich's second wife, but not her own, but a cousin or even a second cousin. Later, Lydia Nord married a friend of Tukhachevsky, a Soviet military leader who was executed along with the marshal. She maintained her friendship with Mikhail Nikolayevich until his last days.

The fact that Nord is a pseudonym is beyond doubt. But as for the name Lydia, there is not even any certainty that it is genuine, and not a pseudonym. It is significant that Nord calls Tukhachevsky's second wife Lika by an abbreviated name from Lydia (remember Chekhov's Lika -

Lydia Mizinov). If this is the true name of her cousin, then it turns out that she and Nord are namesakes. However, it is quite possible that the memoirist took a pseudonym for herself in honor of the wife of the protagonist of her book. Or maybe, on the contrary, she rewarded the unfortunate cousin with her own name, while in life Lika was called differently. In a word, solid pseudonyms, solid riddles. And all because in the Soviet Union it was not customary to be interested in the "personal life" of characters from the series "Life of Remarkable People" (in the late 80s, Tikhachevsky finally got into this prestigious series). Especially if this life was not at all simple, if the hero had more than one wives, and not only wives, but, scary to say, mistresses. Usually, if they paid attention, then the last of the legal spouses, and the rest almost did not exist for biographers. As a result, we know very little about Tikhachevsky's first wife, not too much about the last one either ... And the second wife is generally known only from the memoirs of Lydia Nord. The latter wrote not only a book about Tikhachevsky, but also the novel "Ophelia" - about the life of the Soviet intelligentsia in the 20s and 30s. This novel was published in Vozrozhdenie two years before Marshal Tikhachevsky. In "Ophelia" among the characters there is a certain Lena, the wife of a military man. The epilogue, written in 1958, that is, after "Tikhachevsky", tells about her fate "20 years later":

"Lena's husband, a red general, was shot in 1937 and a month later she was also arrested, although they had long since separated... Since then, Lenchka has been missing..."

Perhaps the prototype of Lena was the one who is called Lika in the book about Tikhachevsky (as we will see, their marriage to Mikhail Nikolaevich did not last long). In this case, it cannot be ruled out that her real name is Elena.

French journalist of Russian origin Viktor Alexandrov, who published a book about the Tikhachevsky case in 1962,

claimed that the real name of Lydia Nord is Zagorskaya. But even this evidence hardly clears the matter. It is not clear whether we are talking about the maiden name of Tikhachevsky's sister-in-law, and if so, did Zagorskaya Lika bear the surname? Or Alexandrov called the name of her husband? And how many husbands did Lydia Nord really have? Indeed, among the convicts, along with Tikhachevsky, there was no person with the surname Zagorsky. Or maybe Zagorskaya is another pseudonym under which Lydia Nord was known in Paris?

Let's try to approach the solution of the problem from the other side. Lydia Nord wrote, in response to criticism from critics, that she "stubbornly does not give her husband's last name":

"Yes, I don't name it. For I have not yet lost my mind and have not become so discouraged as to risk the fate of my relatives, who may have partially survived in the USSR. It may be objected to me that the Soviets already know who I am anyway. Perhaps But it's not a matter of whether they know or don't know, but as long as I haven't named myself, my relatives have the legal right to deny their relationship with Lydia Nord. and who I will forever remain, regardless of all Soviet rehabilitations. I will never be able to forgive the communist authorities for the death of my husband, the death of our relatives and friends, as well as the brutal extermination in Soviet prisons and concentration camps of the best part of the Russian people.

The Soviet government, whatever it may be, will not buy me with any life pensions and other earthly blessings ... "

Today, both the one that she wrote in Paris under the pseudonym Lydia Nord, and the Soviet Union, sincerely hated by her, are no longer alive. By revealing the pseudonym of the author of "Marshal Tukhachevsky", we will no longer cause the slightest harm to anyone. To solve this difficult task, you and I, dear readers, will have to turn to the list of those who were tried together with Tukhachevsky. Lydia Nord once lists them, with one notable exception:

"Gukhachevsky was dismissed in May 1937, and in June of the same year, a special session of the military tribunal, chaired by Ulrich, held a "quick and fair" trial of Tukhachevsky, Uborevich, Primakov, Kork, Yakir, Putna and Eideman..."

One person is brilliantly missing here, who played by no means the last role in the leadership of the People's Commissariat of Defense and was one of Tukhachevsky's closest friends. We are talking about commander Boris Mironovich Feldman, head of the department for the commanding staff of the Red Army (in today's terminology - the Main Directorate of Personnel). By the way, later in her memoirs Lydia Nord still names this name among the defendants at the Tukhachevsky trial, but when she quotes the story of an anonymous eyewitness who was present at the trial. In this way, it seems, she fulfilled her promise never to directly name her husband's real name... For Feldman was her husband. In such a simple way - by skipping one name in the list of defendants - Lydia Nord made it clear to literate, thoughtful readers who exactly her husband was. And in order to disguise his identity from vigilant readers from the Soviet state security, she deliberately confused the dates and chronology of events, sometimes giving mutually exclusive statements. For example, in one place the year of entry of Tukhachevsky into the party is called 1921, in another - 1919 (both

times is incorrect, as we have already seen). The terms of command of Tukhachevsky and Shaposhnikov of the Leningrad Military District and the appointment of Tukhachevsky as Deputy People's Commissar of Defense have been shifted and mixed up. At the same time, hints are made that the husband is Nord, a career officer in the tsarist army, and in the 1920s a teacher at one of the Leningrad military academies. However, there are also many details that do not correspond to this image. It turns out, in particular, that Nord's husband easily communicates with Frunze and other heads of the military department, often goes on inspection trips, which is somehow not typical for an ordinary teacher, and, in addition, in the 30s, it is not clear why and how, he moves to Moscow. But many facts of Feldman's biography coincide with what is told about Nord's husband. Boris Mironovich was the chief of staff of the Leningrad Military District for many years, and in 1934, when Tukhachevsky became deputy people's commissar of defense, he transferred to Moscow, where he headed the department for commanding staff. Incidentally, he was never an officer in the tsarist army. Feldman was called up for military service before the First World War, and by 1917 he was only a non-commissioned officer. Together with Tukhachevsky, Boris Mironovich served on the Western Front, then - during the suppression of the Tambov rebellion and when the future marshal was commander of the Leningrad Military District. As one of the officers of the district headquarters, Major General D.N. Nikishev, recalls, it was Feldman who represented Tukhachevsky to the staff of the headquarters when he took office. Their friendship continued in Moscow, playing like us

we will see in the next chapter, a fatal role in the fabrication of the "Tukhachevsky case."

Lydia Nord often deliberately distorts the dates and positions of many senior military personnel, which critics have repeatedly accused her of. However, in a number of cases, her information is absolutely accurate, and about people who are rather little known, as they say, not the first row, about whom only those who really served together with Tukhachevsky could know. For example, as we remember, when describing the visit of Mikhail Nikolaevich to the forestry, the sister-in-law names a certain Sadlutsky, the chief of artillery of the Western Front, as his companion. And in fact, this position was occupied by a person with such a surname, who, however, did not get into any encyclopedias. He is mentioned, in particular, in his memoirs by such a reliable witness as Chief Marshal of Artillery N. N. Voronov. In 1921, Nikolai Nikolaevich returned from Polish captivity and began to command a battery of one of the DIVISIONS of the Western Front, being subordinate to the "front artillery inspector V.K. it is not surprising if her husband was in charge of the senior command personnel of the Red Army She also mentions the conflict between Tukhachevsky and the Political Directorate of the Western District, confirmed by other sources, connected with accusations of "moral decay".

Interestingly, the Soviet state security quickly figured out who was hiding under the pseudonym Lydia Nord. And the executed husband had to answer for the sins of the emigrant widow before the authorities. Although in January - February 1957 Tukhachevsky and his comrades, including Feldman, were rehabilitated both in court and in the party order, Boris Mironovich turned out to be the only one of them who never got into

one Soviet encyclopedia published since then. He is not in the "Soviet Military Encyclopedia", nor in the "Great Soviet Encyclopedia", nor in two editions of the encyclopedia "Civil War and Military Intervention in the USSR" (the last edition was published in 1987, already at the beginning of perestroika), although not only Tukhachevsky, but Kork, Putna, Eideman, and others are awarded separate articles there. Now the Russian "Military Encyclopedia" is just coming out, but it has not yet reached the letter "F". I wonder if Feldman will be forgiven now, will they finally be honored with a brief biographical sketch?

Lydia Nord, creating the image of her husband - an academy teacher, mentions that he worked at night on a military-theoretical work on a future war. Meanwhile, Feldman, who, unlike Tukhachevsky, managed to graduate from the military academy of the Red Army back in 1921, actually wrote such a book in 1931, when he was chief of staff of the Leningrad Military District. It was called "On the Characteristics of New Trends in Military Affairs" and went through two editions during the year. Surely this book was written in close contact with Tukhachevsky, who at the same time, in the spring of 1931, began work on his main work, New Questions of War. We will return to this work later. In the meantime, I would like to digress a bit and say a few words about Feldman's work.

Boris Mironovich, although he was a close friend of Tukhachevsky, maintained good relations with his antagonist Voroshilov, who helped Feldman during the civil war and later, already in peacetime. The commander called the people's commissar of defense his father. This friendship is not

saved Feldman from death .. But in 1931, Boris Mironovich did not know his fate and, with filial gratitude, decided in his book to please the old cavalryman Kliment Efremovich, arguing that the cavalry would play a significant role in a future war:

"The cavalry, forced out of the battlefield by powerful equipment, acquires greater value in the theater of operations than in the past. Armies richly equipped with equipment are more dependent on their rear than the armies of the world war. The Achilles' heel of motorized and mechanized armies is a heavy rear , with huge stocks of firearms, tanks of gasoline and oil. The role of the cavalry, which, having found their way to this sensitive rear, creates a threat to it, increases even more in comparison with the past. Technically rich infantry is a weapon of frontal actions. Than more tanks, machine guns , guns, the more complicated the maneuver of the infantry. The cavalry will remain the most powerful weapon of flank influence in a future war. Thus, the new equipment, outliving the tactical activity of the cavalry, reducing the battle on horseback to a rare and happy exception, increases the scope of its operational and strategic use Simultaneously with the movement of the combat activity of the cavalry from the battlefield to the theater of war (that is, to the enemy rear. - B.S.), its strength is being transferred from cold weapons to fire and other ... technical means ... in the cavalry divisions of the advanced armies such new weapons as armored vehicles, tanks,

aircraft.

Thanks to the introduction of technology, the cavalry acquires even greater mobility, which, together with increased firepower, revives its former glory. The future cavalry is a combination of rider's dashing, mobility

a horse with powerful fire weapons - armored vehicles, aircraft, artillery, wedges. The cavalry, having handed over to the archives of history the ancient pike and, along with it, an archaic view of the combat use of cavalry, must seriously prepare for its new role in the theaters of military operations. A blow with a cold weapon is the simplest and easiest; he is as old as the world; the blow of a massed cavalry in cooperation with the latest technology requires more solid training and more serious preparation. Our red cavalry, not forgetting for a moment that the Eastern European theater in which it will have to operate at first, as well as socio-economic and political factors in the enemy rear, open up completely new horizons for it, must fully master the art of firefighting, completely master the use of modern technology. The program for the coming years should provide for the saturation of the red cavalry with self-propelled artillery, armored vehicles and light tanks. The red cavalry is a formidable weapon in our future battle with imperialism; to sing her a waste, to turn her into a traveling infantry - is mistaken and harmful.

Yes, the inspirational anthem of the red cavalry, you can't say anything. Voroshilov and Budyonny must have been pleased to read this. As you can see, the confrontation in the discussion about the role of cavalry in a future war did not quite coincide with the division of high-ranking military men into groups of Voroshilov and Tukhachevsky, but was more complicated, more dramatic.

In fairness, we note that Voroshilov himself was not opposed to saturating the army with new equipment. As an epigraph to his work, Feldman quoted from the speech of the people's commissar at the Tenth Congress of the Komsomol in January 31st:

"War in the present conditions requires a huge number of machines, and machines for various purposes, different names and enormous technical complexity. War is being mechanized, industrialized, turning into a huge ... factory for the extermination of people."

Tukhachevsky, however, unlike Voroshilov and his friend Feldman, did not attach much importance to the cavalry, and in *New Questions of War* he did not even find a separate paragraph for it. But it does not follow from this that at that moment he looked at the role of tanks and other military equipment in a fundamentally different way. Simply, Tukhachevsky never commanded cavalry formations and evaluated the possibilities of new means of combat, primarily in terms of saturating the infantry with them. For example, both Tukhachevsky and Feldman distinguished between tanks of direct infantry support and long-range tanks capable of fighting independently, as part of mechanized formations. Moreover, Feldman believed that it was still impossible to say with certainty which trend in the development of tank forces would ultimately prevail. Tukhachevsky, on the other hand, put independent actions of tanks to "capture the rear" of the enemy in the foreground.

We also emphasize that in the early 1930s there were still very few tanks in the Red Army, as in the armies of other countries. Naturally, neither Voroshilov nor Tukhachevsky could know exactly when the future war would begin and how many tanks would be at the disposal of the belligerents. The condition of Russian roads traditionally did not serve as a source of national pride, so in some cases a cavalryman could pass where not only a car, but even a tank got stuck. In the end, offering a gradual saturation of the cavalry with tanks, wedges

and other techniques, Feldman was not so wrong. In all the armies of the world, tank divisions were reorganized from the former cavalry divisions. Another thing is that in the end there were no cavalry units left in the tank divisions, just as there were no actual cavalry formations left. Only in the Red Army until the Great Patriotic War did they continue to talk about the interaction of cavalry and tanks, which during the war only led to unnecessary human losses. However, in the early 1930s, both Tukhachevsky, and Voroshilov, and Feldman focused on a mobile war, where there would be no continuous positional front, and the cavalry would be able to freely penetrate into the enemy rear. The troops of the western neighbors - Poland and Germany at that time were not numerous and could not create a sufficient density of defense on their eastern borders. No one can foresee the development of the military and political situation in all the most important aspects. As we will see later, Tukhachevsky was also mistaken to a large extent about the nature of the future war, although, on the contrary, he foresaw a lot of things very accurately, as if looking into some kind of magic book or mirror.

Let us return, however, to Lydia Nord and her memoirs. How, after all, did Feldman's widow end up in the West, and how much can her memoirs be trusted? From a number of hints in the book "*Marshal Tukhachevsky*" one can understand (unless, of course, Lydia Nord mystifies readers in order to hide the circumstances of her biography from the Chekists) that she was arrested shortly after her husband's arrest, and was released before the start of World War II (perhaps, within the framework of the "Beria thaw"?). In the novel "*Ophelia*" one can, if desired, see hints that the woman who wrote it was married

for a soldier who served after the war in Germany. It is possible that Lydia Nord alone or together with her husband fled to one of the western occupation zones in the second half of the 40s. At that time it was a kind of sport among the officers of the Soviet Army serving in the east of Germany, and perhaps the most famous of the fugitives was the writer Grigory Klimov, whose books about the occult machinations of the Bolsheviks are quite popular in Russia. If our assumption is correct, then the appearance of Feldman's widow in Paris no later than the beginning of 1950 becomes quite understandable.

As for the degree of reliability of her testimonies... Lydia Nord gives lengthy conversations with Tukhachevsky, Frunze, and other military leaders. She cites from memory, since she could not keep any records, even if she did, in prison and camp conditions. Although she has a professional memory (back in the USSR, Feldman's wife, according to her, was engaged in journalism), it is hard to believe that she reproduced the speeches of her protagonist and other characters verbatim. In addition, Lydia Nord could have added something, both for disguise and under the influence of an all-consuming passion for artistic creativity (her novel "Ophelia", subtitled "Notes of an Artist", is devoted to creativity). Therefore, I think that Lydia Nord's book on Tukhachevsky, and especially the speeches of the marshal, his friends and enemies, should be approached in the same way as the speeches of the heroes of the "History" of the great ancient Greek historian Thucydides - one of the founders of historical science and criticism of sources. He confessed:

"As for speeches ... then remember exactly and reproduce their meaning

it was impossible - neither those that I had to hear myself, nor those that others told me about. But what, in my opinion, every speaker could say the most appropriate on the subject (and I adhere as closely as possible to the general sense of the speeches actually delivered), this is what I made them say in my story.

In the same way, we will hope that, if not the letter, then the spirit of the statements of Tukhachevsky and other characters in her memoir narrative, Lydia Nord conveys quite accurately, and we allow ourselves to quote them abundantly (of course, with reference to the source). After all, none of those who survived the "red marshal" left such frank memories of him, not adjusted to the requirements of censorship, and none of them was as close to him in the 20s and 30s as she was. And besides, only in Lydia's memoirs Nord Tukhachevsky appears not as an angel (although the marshal's sister-in-law sympathizes) and not as a devil, but as a truly living person.

Now it is worth citing the story of the sister-in-law, how the marriage of Mikhail Nikolayevich and Lika ended:

"About a year passed, and a deep crack suddenly formed in the lives of the young. This became especially obvious after their trip to Moscow. Nobody knew what happened. , and, always sad, she seemed five years older (Tukhachevsky, I recall, was twice as old as his second wife. - B.S.) Tukhachevsky was also silent - he never complained about his wife and remained ... invariably attentive to her .

After some time, Lika came with her things to her uncle - she said that she had returned completely. In the evening, Tukhachevsky arrived at the forestry. Lika did not come out to him. Tukhachevsky spoke for a long time with Yevgeny Ivanovich in his office. After his departure, the forester went to his niece and sat with her for a long time, but Lika never returned to her husband. At the same time, both sides experienced a breakup hard. Each in his own way ... Tukhachevsky, in addition to other feelings, was painfully hurt pride.

Lidia Nord conveys various rumors that accompanied the breakup of Mikhail Nikolaevich and Lika. The most piquant of them, but, as it seems, the most far from reality, was that the legendary army commander was a fan of the no less legendary Marquis de Sade:

"... They talked about the sadism of Tukhachevsky, who allegedly beat his wife (the first, which allegedly drove her to suicide. - B.S.) with a thin whip to the blood. In connection with these rumors, the military commissar Mayer decided to talk to Tukhachevsky and find out the truth "along the party line", but a few minutes later he left the commander's office, backing away, and, bumping his back against Sadlutsky, muttered in embarrassment that "everything is going well" ... "

But there was no prosperity in Tukhachevsky's relationship with Lika. Lydia Nord hints that the reason for the breakup was Mikhail Nikolayevich's affair with another woman:

"Once he appeared in the theater with a strikingly beautiful tall blonde - Tatyana Sergeevna Chernolusskaya. The next day, all the garrison ladies were gossiping about this. Details were reported that

Chernolusskaya is the half-sister of Lunacharsky (People's Commissar of Education. - B.S.) (it was true) that she came from Novozybkov to visit her godmother, because she had long been in love with Tukhachevsky, ever since Tukhachevsky slightly courted her sister, less beautiful, but very graceful little brunette Natasha.

Mikhail Nikolaevich began to appear with Tatyana quite often. He even advertised his meetings with her. Maybe it was revenge on his wife. Lika, who had gone to Petrograd to live with her relatives, returned at that time to the forestry. Even before her arrival in Petrograd, a letter arrived from her aunt, who wrote: "Influence Lika, she makes a tragedy out of trifles and wants to break up with her husband, who is a very worthy person and loves her. Lika is still very young and does not understand herself that she does. Unfortunately, she does not listen to me, and Zhenya indulges her in everything. Besides (she may hide it from you) she will have a child. Where will she go with him?"

Relatives began to convince Lika to make peace with her husband. A relative was especially zealous, who had previously opposed this marriage, but, after meeting Tukhachevsky at a wedding, was fascinated by him. She said to Lika:

"You cannot take a church divorce with him. Your marriage was secret, and the divorce is associated with publicity, which can ruin not only his career, but also his life. A civil divorce does not give you anything - before God you will remain his wife. Then, you you have no moral right

to deprive your unborn child of a father is a terrible sin ... You alone will not live your whole life, and your second husband may not love your child. What will you do then? Change husbands like gloves? But tell me, for God's sake, what happened between you?"

However, Lika remained stubbornly silent in response to all questions. Rumors about Tukhachevsky's affair began to reach the forestry, but Yevgeny Ivanovich in every possible way protected his niece from them. Lika had a daughter. Tukhachevsky was informed about her birth by the wife of one of the commanders during a gala evening dedicated to the anniversary of the October Revolution. Lydia Nord recounts the conversation as follows:

"I am very happy that the birth went well. Your daughter is an amazingly large child - weighs more than nine pounds ... Anna Mikhailovna called me on the phone just before the meeting. She said that the girl is your spitting image, but a terrible screamer ... "

Tukhachevsky unbuttoned the collar of his tunic, then fastened it again: "Thank you. Excuse me, I have to call to find out about my wife's health." He left the hall with his even, unhurried gait.

As soon as the solemn part ended, Tukhachevsky galloped off somewhere on horseback. The orderly said that the commander returned only in the morning.

As a result, Chernolusskaya was dismissed. Tukhachevsky returned to his wife. But they never truly reconciled. Lydia Nord said that, for the first time after a long break, she saw Tukhachevsky at her bedside,

"Lika turned terribly pale and closed her eyes. He bent down and lightly touched her forehead with his lips. Then he went to the cradle and looked at his daughter with curiosity for a long time."

Lika and Tukhachevsky hardly spoke, although Mikhail

Nikolayevich now regularly visited his daughter, who was named Irina (again, there is no certainty that the memoirist indicates the correct name, as well as in the case of Chernolusskaya). As if Tukhachevsky insisted on this name, replacing another given by his wife, and registering his daughter himself. The girl was christened at home. The godfather was Yevgeny Ivanovich, the godmother was Lika's cousin (is it Lydia Nord?).

Three months later, the father, taking the girl in his arms, confidently concluded that she had gone to Tukhachevsky. And he added, turning to Anna Mikhailovna, but in such a way that Lika could hear:

"Grow up a little - then I'll take care of it properly. It is necessary to raise a child early and firmly ..."

But the wife did not accept her husband's attempts to claim her rights to her daughter. Lydia Nord notes that he sometimes did it in a very peculiar way. For example, he took a toy he did not like or just a thing and, without saying a word, threw it into the stove. But the next visit brought her a replacement. According to the sister-in-law,

"Gukhachevsky did not demand the return of his wife, but he managed to place himself in the forestry in such a way that everyone felt that he was Lika's husband. After

the birth of a child, he carefully handed Anna Mikhailovna a decent amount of money from his salary for expenses, and when she decided to make some remark to Lika in his presence, Mikhail Nikolaevich politely but decisively stopped her, pointing out that Lika was no longer a child and his wife. The forester, who adored his "first granddaughter", was bribed by Tukhachevsky's attitude towards the child and defended the "father's right" in front of his niece.

However, unfortunately, it was not destined to take up the education of Irina Tukhachevsky. Everything was spoiled by an unexpected visit to the forestry of Chernolusskaya. She introduced herself as Tukhachevsky's sister and called Lika to a private conversation. Already during this conversation, Anna Mikhailovna realized who exactly the unexpected guest was, wanted to interfere with the conversation, but the door to the room was locked. An hour later Tatyana came out and silently left the house. After she left, Lika said to Anna Mikhailovna:

"What are you, aunt ... Did you really think that I did not know about her even then ... Just warn your uncle - I gave her my word that Mikhail Nikolayevich would not find out that she was here ... And then, there is no need for a new scandal ... "In the evening, Tukhachevsky arrived. He tried to look cheerful, only hiding his hand with fresh longitudinal scratches under the tablecloth - probably a trace of a stormy explanation with Chernolusskaya. Mikhail Nikolaevich spent the night in the forestry. Before going to bed, Anna Mikhailovna asked her husband: "Do you think that she loves him and forgave him even when she found out?" - "She did not forgive ... Maybe she loves him, but something else has become between them ... She will leave him anyway ..."

And so it happened. A month later, Lika and her daughter went to their grandmother in Kharkov. Since then, Tukhachevsky saw Irina no more than once every six months, but he never met her mother at the same time: Lika did not go out to him. Soon the daughter died of diphtheria. The divorced couple met at her funeral. The telegram about Irina's illness did not find Tukhachevsky on the spot, and he saw his daughter already in the coffin. At home, Mikhail Nikolayevich saw Irina's knitted shoes and took them for himself. Since then, according to Lydia Nord, he always carried them with him in memory of his daughter and Lika. Many years later, in 1931, shortly before leaving Leningrad

in connection with his appointment to Moscow, Tukhachevsky, taking the recipe out of his pocket, dropped an envelope with Irina's shoes on the floor. By the way Mikhail Nikolayevich was embarrassed at this, by the way he immediately rushed to the exit and for no reason at all kicked a small round table that got in the way, so hard that the table flew off to the stove and split, Lydia Nord understood that he still loves Lika. And the sister-in-law's remark, which preceded the scandal, that Lika was quite happy with her second husband, caused an overly irritated reaction, which showed that Tukhachevsky was still not indifferent to his second wife.

"Happy?" he tore at the belt. "But he is not her husband... Yes... Yes!... Not her husband! Let her not forget that we were married... She may have twenty civil divorces, but in the eyes of the church and in the face of God will remain my wife for life. Ask the priest, "believing" woman. Lydia Nord could not hide her surprise: "In the eyes of the church, maybe ... But God sees the truth. And it seems very strange to me when a communist suddenly begins to appeal to the church and to God."

Indeed, for the orthodox atheist Tukhachevsky, it seems somehow unnatural to turn to God in a moment of spiritual

confusion. But, perhaps, in the depths of consciousness, Mikhail Nikolaevich still had a feeling of God-forsakenness, some remnants of a religious feeling that the communist idea had not completely replaced? Perhaps, from here, from the desire to drown out the inner call to God, comes his mockery of the rites and dogmas, both Christian and Muslim, which the memoirists tell about? As Major General N. I. Koritsky recalls, once in the 18th, during the fighting in the Volga region, one of his colleagues brought Tukhachevsky

"a wide Tatar robe. Mikhail Nikolaevich dressed in it, made a semblance of a turban from a towel, and, sitting down in Turkish, began to call the faithful to prayer in the Tatar language - give or take muezzin at the minaret."

And later in Smolensk, the old-timers remembered how Mikhail Nikolaevich walked around the city with his dog named Khristosik.

By the way, with the help of the episode with the slippers and the broken table, Lydia Nord, although in a very peculiar way, introduces into her memoirs a hidden dating of events close to the true, disguised by a fictitious chronology lying on the surface. She claims that Tukhachevsky's departure from Leningrad and his appointment to Moscow, as well as the scene with the shoes, took place in 1925, even before Frunze's death that followed that year. However, at the beginning of the story, the marshal's sister-in-law lets slip that this episode refers to the time twelve years after the death of Tukhachevsky's daughter. According to all reports, the acquaintance and wedding of Mikhail Nikolayevich and Lika took place in the winter of 1920/21, so Irina could not die before 1922, already during the secondary command of her father on the Western Front. Meanwhile, Tukhachevsky headed the Leningrad Military District in 1928-1931. Therefore, the story told by Lydia Nord happened in the 31st year. Perhaps, speaking of a period of twelve years, she involuntarily shifted the events a little, timing them to 1934, the year her husband B. M. Feldman left Leningrad.

I think that not only Tukhachevsky's affair with Chernolusskaya or some other woman led to the fact that Lika broke up with her husband. After all, the year of their marriage for Tukhachevsky was the year of Kronstadt and Tambov,

a year of reprisals against those whom the Reds called "their own" a few months ago and in whose name they were going to make a world revolution. In the chapter on the Kronstadt uprising, I have already quoted Mikhail Nikolayevich's story to his sister-in-law about his feelings about its suppression. Surely the conviction that he was right cost Tukhachevsky a lot of mental effort. And Lika could be horrified by the moral change that had taken place in her husband (or only now noticed by her), his readiness to shoot compatriots without regret, often unarmed, driven to the extreme by the hardships of war and food requisitions. And Tukhachevsky, it seems, loved her until the end of his life, although he later married for the third time, and he had enough mistresses.

In a more than frivolous attitude to the bonds of marriage, Mikhail Nikolayevich did not fundamentally differ much from other commanders of the Red Army in the 20s and 30s. Church marriage was almost forbidden, and for the communists it was simply dangerous, because it threatened with exclusion from the party and the complete collapse of a career. And if it comes to that, the wedding, as we have just seen, did not save the second marriage.

Tukhachevsky. And civil marriage was by no means recognized as obligatory. People converged, lived for several years, dispersed. From such fragile unions there were children doomed to fatherlessness with living fathers. In the army, one of the most closed, self-contained cells of society, the flirtation of senior commanders with the wives of subordinates flourished in full bloom. The archives preserved a report about a curious incident that occurred in the mid-30s in Minsk, at the headquarters of the Belarusian military district at a banquet after heavy drinking. It seemed to one of the commanders, one must assume not without reason, that the commander of the district, commander I.P. Uborevich (we note in brackets - a close friend of Tukhachevsky) was too frankly courting his wife, and he slapped Jerome Petrovich with a cake in the face. Approximately at the same time, a major from Leningrad complained that Marshal Tukhachevsky, deputy people's commissar, had been driving his wife around in his car for several hours without the knowledge of her husband. Who knows, maybe Mikhail Nikolayevich allowed himself something more, about which his wife preferred not to tell the jealous major. Yes, if Tukhachevsky stood out from the commander's environment in this respect, it was only because he was a polite, gallant gentleman (this is noted by everyone who knew him), never used rude words, did not abuse alcohol. According to Lydia Nord, her brother-in-law preferred brandy to traditional vodka for red commanders, and even he began to use it somewhat more abundantly only in the last months of his life, feeling the clouds gathering over him.

Soon after Tukhachevsky's second marriage, he had a conflict with the Revolutionary Military Council of the Western Front. A colleague of Mikhail Nikolayevich I. A. Telyatnikov, who at that time worked in the political department of the front and was a member of the party bureau, told about him, although very vaguely:

"I remember well what an unhealthy situation created around Tukhachevsky at the beginning of 1924, shortly before his appointment as assistant chief of staff of the Red Army. Dirty gossip spread. They came, as it seemed to me, from the head of the Political Directorate V. N. Kasatkin, a power-hungry man and, of course, prone to

intrigue. Vasiliev, the secretary of the party organization, also played an unseemly role. Through his efforts, almost the entire party bureau was involved in the quarrelsome business. As a result, Tukhachevsky left for a new duty station with a very unflattering characterization. At a meeting of the party bureau, when this characterization was discussed, Mikhail Nikolayevich behaved with enviable restraint and dignity. But I got the impression that he doesn't know how to defend himself."

Here the memoirist clearly connected the two conflicts that took place at Tukhachevsky with the Revolutionary Military Council of the Western Front. The first of these occurred in 1921, shortly after the second marriage of Mikhail Nikolaevich and before his appointment on July 25 as head and commissar of the Military Academy of the Red Army in Moscow. This appointment itself was clearly the result of tense relations with the party leadership of the front.

Lydia Nord spoke in more detail about the circumstances of this conflict. It turns out that in the Red Army at that time there was still such an "old-mode relic" as duels. One of them was the reason for the beginning of the conflict. In a drunken case, the commander and commissar of the regiment shot because of a woman, and the duel was initiated by

the commissioner, who promised the commander to kill him "like a dog" if he refuses to fight. As a result, the commissar was killed, and the commander was wounded in the arm. Both duelists were party members and, in the words of the memoirist, "hereditary proletarians," so that the version of the murder of the commissar "for counter-revolutionary motives" immediately burst like a soap bubble. The version about a conflict in the service also fell away, since the commander and commissar served in different regiments. Therefore, according to the testimony of Tukhachevsky's sister-in-law,

"The Revolutionary Military Council of the Western Army (front. - B.S.) (then there were no political departments yet) (here Lydia Nord is absolutely right and Telyatnikov is wrong: the Revolutionary Military Council of the Western Front was replaced by the Political Department only in April 1924, after Tukhachevsky left Smolensk; I also note that V. N. Kasatkin temporarily served as a member of the Revolutionary Military Council until December 1923, and it is quite possible that the conflict described did not occur at the beginning of the 24th, but at the end of the 23rd year. - B. S.), Having sorted out the case, I decided to hush it up.

The order announced that the commissar "carelessly unloaded a revolver" and in doing so not only mortally wounded himself, but also managed to hook the commander who received a severe reprimand. Almost like Mikhail Bulgakov in "Days of the Turbins", where a German major reports on the imaginary wounding of General Schrott (under the guise of which the "instant evacuation" of the unlucky "Hetman of All Ukraine" P. 1. Skoropadsky is carried out, having bandaged his face):

"General von Schrott caught a revolver in his trousers, mistakenly hit his head."

So in the case of the duel between the commander and the commissar, the farce of the official version was too obvious.

It was not possible to "put on the brakes" on the duel case. Lydia Nord describes the further development of events as follows:

"Whether someone reported duels to Moscow or the Revolutionary Military Council ... I myself sent a report there - I don't know, but soon special representatives arrived from there for a new analysis of the case. "thrives

the most disgusting remnant of officerhood is dueling."

One evening, a very frightened chief of artillery of the army appeared to the commander ... Sadlutsky, accompanied by the head of the Special Department ... and the army commissar Smirnov.

"Imagine, the commission hasn't finished its work yet, and I'm already preparing a new duel," Sadlutsky said, greeting, "that's why we came to you ..."

The essence of the matter came down to a quarrel between the assistant commander of one artillery regiment and the chief of ammunition supply of the same regiment. The first went to the second in the physiognomy, after he called him a "gold-running contra". The wife of the head of the ammunition supply managed to inform about the upcoming duel, fearing for her husband's life.

Lidia Nord's account of how Tukhachevsky resolved the situation seems credible due to the abundance of highly plausible details and

characterizes Mikhail Nikolaevich from the best side. It is worth quoting almost in its entirety:

"Gukhachevsky raised his eyebrows. I thought. Then he looked around and asked:

"What did you decide?" - "We believe, - answered ... the head of the Special Department, that the assistant to the regimental commander should be responsible for assault - this is not the tsarist army ..." - he emphasized venomously.

"Massing can be considered when a senior commander hits a junior or a soldier, they have the same rank," the commander said dryly and turned to the commissar: "What do you think?" "I believe that even at the first misunderstandings (and there were such) the assistant to the regiment commander should have come to the regiment commissar and complained to him," Smirnov answered.

"Complaining about a comrade, and even about trifles, was considered fiscal in our country," Tukhachevsky objected. - quickly asked the head of the Special Department. "Comrades in the class. Fiscal got it in such a way that he remembered it for the rest of his life. What certification does the assistant commander have?" - asked the commander of Sadlutsky. "Excellent. Prior to that, he commanded a separate artillery battalion. His battalion came out on top in all training and demonstration firing. I nominated him out of turn for the position of assistant commander."

Tukhachevsky nodded his head and turned to Smirnov: "Summon all the regimental commissars to me and work this issue with them thoroughly. We need to stop insulting commanders who honestly serve in the Red Army and strengthen its combat capability. and against duels. Tell them that they have been fighting against them lately in the tsarist army too ... - Tukhachevsky suddenly grinned and, turning to Smirnov, said: And where did your chicks get such "guards manners" from? "Imitation," the head of the Special Section muttered.

"Let them imitate what is good," snapped the commander. "For example, they pay less tax on their comrades..." "But what about revolutionary vigilance then?" - he fired an arrow in turn.

"When the entire command staff is firmly and amicably soldered, it will be much easier to identify the real enemies of the revolution," Tukhachevsky answered coldly and calmly. He got up and straightened his belt, which was always a sign of hidden irritation with him. "I think," he rapped out, "that Sadlutsky should talk to the assistant to the regiment commander in order to

henceforth he was more restrained. And in the event of a repetition of such insults, he must submit an official report to his superiors. The head of the ammunition supply will need to be urgently transferred to another unit located in another city. You can't serve them together after that..."

For the failed duelists, everything ended relatively well, which is a considerable merit of Tukhachevsky. But the commander paid the price for his inability to work with the Revolutionary Military Council and his unwillingness to recognize the right of the commissars to intervene in military matters proper, as

we have already said, transfer to the military academy.

Here he did not stay long, also entering into heated disputes with academic professors from regular colonels and generals of the tsarist army about the ways of developing the Soviet armed forces and military art. About his work in the academy, I will say a little later. In the meantime, I will only note that most likely then, in Moscow, an affair that destroyed Tukhachevsky's second marriage began with Chernolussskaya or with someone else.

In January 1922, Mikhail Nikolaevich was returned to command the Western Front. He remained in this post until the end of March 1924. Perhaps his return was due to the activation of Bulak-Balakhovich's detachments. In the Kremlin, not without reason, they hoped that the winner of Antonov would cope with them. Indeed, within a few months, Bulak-Balakhovich's people were pushed back beyond the Polish border. And shortly before the final departure of Mikhail Nikolayevich from Smolensk, he had a second and last conflict with the Revolutionary Military Council of the front. The People's Commissariat for Military and Naval Affairs received a denunciation of Tukhachevsky from the secretary of the party committee of the Western Front with accusations of a wrong attitude towards the communists and immoral behavior. M. V. Frunze imposed on the denunciation a resolution favorable to the friend:

"The Party believed Tukhachevsky, believes and will continue to believe."

Obviously, the reason for the denunciation was the second divorce of Tukhachevsky and his extramarital affairs. Frunze, of course, did not destroy his friend. And, besides, if every "immoral" were then given a move, the Red Army risked being left without a command staff, and without a significant part of the commissars.

Frunze took over as Chief of Staff of the Red Army and Deputy Chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic in March 1924. Obviously, the denunciation of Tukhachevsky dates back to this time. Frunze responded to this denunciation by promoting Tukhachevsky in office. Mikhail Nikolaevich since April 1924 took the post of Assistant Chief of Staff of the Red Army. And his enemies from the Political Directorate of the Western Front were soon removed. As I. A. Telyatnikov testifies:

"Life itself took away false slander. Less than a year later, M.N. Tukhachevsky returned to Smolensk again. He was appointed to command the Western Military District. And Kasatkin and his henchmen disappeared."

Here the memoirist, again, contaminates two conflicts. After all, Tukhachevsky returned to Smolensk after the first conflict back in 1922, and Kasatkin remained at his post in 1923, from February to December, even temporarily acting as a member of the Revolutionary Military Council of the Western Front. And here is Vasiliev (perhaps it is he who appears in Lydia Nord

under the name Smirnov) was removed from the post of secretary of the party bureau even before the "second coming" of Tukhachevsky. Probably, in Moscow they decided to punish the initiator of the squabble in order to slow down the flow of slander at least a little. Vasiliev's place was taken by Telyatnikov. In his memoirs, he cites a conversation with the commander, when he again became registered with the party and gave the secretary of the party committee a personal file, where all the materials about the first conflict were collected. While Telyatnikov leafed through a very

plump folder, Tukhachevsky told him:

"You must completely dispel all the misunderstandings that have caused me so much trouble. There are no military commissars in the headquarters now, the chief of staff is non-party. All my hope is in you, and then relations between us need complete clarity. I understand and highly appreciate the political agencies and party organizations. He himself began his service in the Red Army from the post of political commissar ... "

Telyatnikov said:

"Our conversation dragged on past midnight. Mikhail Nikolayevich spoke in detail about his life path, explained the motives that led him to the ranks of the Bolshevik Party. But most of all, of course, we tried to figure out the reasons that led to last year's attacks on Tukhachevsky. From this long conversation, I came to the firm conviction that Tukhachevsky is an honest, sincere man, although intrigues are weaved around him. orders. Sometimes this was done against the wishes of the leaders of the military department, and over the years they developed a persistent hostility to Tukhachevsky. "

It would seem that either Telyatnikov or Tukhachevsky himself can be suspected of insincerity in this case. After all, we have repeatedly seen that during the civil war, the commander of the military commissars did not really complain and defended the right of communist commanders to command without supervision from vigilant commissars. But it seems to me that neither the memoirist nor his interlocutor was disingenuous. One of the main qualities of Tukhachevsky, which ensured the rapid development of his career, many historians consider his alleged "extraordinary ability to adapt." It was with these words that German General Karl Shpalke, who repeatedly met with Mikhail Nikolaevich, described Tukhachevsky, assessing his rapid career under the Bolsheviks:

"He, among other talents, brought with him an extraordinary ability to adapt, which allowed him to bypass the innumerable reefs in the maelstrom of the revolution, to reach an initially impregnable post."

To some extent, this is true, although in fact there was nothing extraordinary in "tuning" the youngest marshhal of the Red Army. Tukhachevsky, as an intelligent and well-mannered man, undoubtedly built a conversation with any interlocutor in such a way as not to annoy him unnecessarily, and even more so to embitter him. So, talking with the secretary of the party bureau, he, of course, did not begin to tell him about the uselessness of the institute of commissars in the army, but tried to find "points of contact", stressed that he himself began serving as a military commissar ... Yes, and Mikhail Nikolayevich could not deny the role of party organizations in

Red Army, if he himself joined the party after the October Revolution and it was in the Bolshevik Party that he saw the means to revive the power of the Russian army, at least in the first years of Soviet power. Another thing is that Tukhachevsky's "tuning" to his interlocutor had nothing to do with a penchant for intrigue. On the contrary, if we recall his movements along the fronts of the civil

wars, often caused by conflicts with members of the Revolutionary Military Council and higher commanders, it is clear that not once did the opponents of the young commander pay as a result of a skirmish with him with their posts. Yes, and Tukhachevsky was appointed to new positions only because of his organizational, strong-willed and military leadership qualities and in no way contributed to the displacement of his predecessors in order to make room for himself. He did not weave intrigues against others, but he himself became a victim of envy and intrigue. And the last intrigue against Tukhachevsky, as we know, led to his death.

Despite the fact that Mikhail Nikolayevich remained largely a stranger to commanders and commissars of worker-peasant origin and with pre-revolutionary party experience, he was no longer his own for the bulk of the former tsarist officers and generals who served in the Red Army. Lydia Nord writes well about this: "Tukhachevsky waged a long and stubborn struggle, defending the rights of "qualified army personnel", non-party military specialists from former officers. Many commissars and political workers did not hide their distrust of them and, at the first opportunity, ran to complain about them in Special departments. In most cases, former officers did not run there to complain, and when it became unbearable, they filed a report with their superiors about the impossibility of working in such conditions. Tukhachevsky was very attentive to such reports and immediately ordered each case to be analyzed and reported to him. He successfully defended and those whom they wanted to be demobilized from the army on unfounded denunciations. He smashed all the absurd accusations with logical arguments and, if necessary, wrote a report to the Revolutionary Military Council in Moscow ...

But Tukhachevsky had many ill-wishers from among the former officers ... Partly, the offense played a role that the former general or colonel, who believed that their military experience and knowledge far exceeded the experience and military training of Tukhachevsky, had to obey the 29-year-old commander, "clicker from lieutenants". Resentment was especially sharply felt when rumors reached that Tukhachevsky asked in Moscow for secondment from his army (and later, when he was the head of the Leningrad Military District, from some parts of this district) of the most elderly combat commanders. Tukhachevsky petitioned for their appointment to military academies and advanced training courses for officers, where they could be of great use with their knowledge.

Tukhachevsky pulled up the youngest and most capable, preferring them to more experienced "old men". He believed that the age limit for a regimental commander should not exceed 50 years.

"At this age, a person already wears out, begins to suffer from gout, rheumatism, heart disease, and so on," he said. "Where can he command a unit with his current maneuverability?"

The old combatants considered their transfer to teaching positions "tantamount to resignation."

Tukhachevsky did not get along with those who got a job in the Red Army, as in a well-paid place guaranteeing a certain security, and then turned out to be a negligent owner of his unit.

The commander very often and unexpectedly appeared at the location of one or another regiment. Before going to the headquarters, he examined the materiel,

looked into the stables, talked with the soldiers, then appeared at the regimental exercises and, asking them to continue them, sat down and watched carefully. From there he went to the kitchen, to the warehouses. He forbade reporting his arrival. When the news of the commander's visit reached the commander, Tukhachevsky already had time to inspect everything and draw his own conclusions. Finding big omissions in the unit, Tukhachevsky left without seeing its commander. The commander called to the commander. Tukhachevsky did not scold him, but spoke very briefly:

"Your regiment is in an ugly state. If you don't bring it into full order within three weeks, you will go to command a "regiment" (obviously, a cropped territorial unit, which in peacetime had only a very small permanent composition of fighters and commanders. - B.S.) ..."

It was useless to object and justify in such cases. Tukhachevsky got up, pulled on his belt and said dryly: "That's all. You are free."

In a word, a party servant, a father to soldiers. The trouble, however, was that, sincerely caring about the rank-and-file soldiers and enjoying considerable popularity among them, Tukhachevsky was rather lonely among the higher and middle command staff, he met envy and hidden hostility there. The young army commander really contributed to the removal of former generals and staff officers of the tsarist army from combat posts. However, the leadership of the party, headed by Stalin, led the matter to purge the Red Army of non-party "old-regime" officers in general, including the younger ones, on whom Tukhachevsky thought to rely. Officers were either demobilized from the army (and even at the end of 1921 they made up more than a third of the entire command staff), or transferred to teaching and other non-combat positions. The influence of Trotsky, who had already declared at the Tenth Congress of Soviets in the same 21st year that the command staff of the Red Army had become a single, welded organism, and who was opposed to the expulsion of old military specialists from the army, was rapidly falling. In January 1925, he was removed from the leadership of the military department. Stalin and his supporters, the most prominent of whom in the Red Army was Voroshilov, saw their support in the nominees of the period of the civil war from among the former non-commissioned officers (such in the 21st year among the Red commanders accounted for 13 percent) and workers and peasants (their there were more than half), who were heavily recruited as party members (in 1923, the share of communists in the army exceeded 10 percent). Tukhachevsky, in the implementation of his plans for the reorganization of the Red Army (and they were very ambitious), could more or less firmly rely only on a narrow layer of former tsarist officers, who, like him, linked their fate quite early with the Communist Party. It is significant that most of those who ended up in the dock with Tukhachevsky were just such military leaders - Uborevich, Eideman, Putna ... A second lieutenant and two ensigns who joined the RCP (6) in the 17th year. Only Kork managed to rise to the rank of lieutenant colonel and, probably, therefore, into the ranks of the Bolsheviks

got up a little later - only in 1927. By the way, with such an insignificant support among the higher and middle command staff, there was nothing to think about any successful military conspiracy and coup ... Lydia Nord talks in some detail about Tukhachevsky's work at the academy (he remained its main head of strategy even as an assistant, and then Deputy Chief of Staff of the Red Army, until the autumn of 1925). Only the marshal's sister-in-law relates the stay

Tukhachevsky as head of the academy at the end of the 20s or even the beginning of the 30s, after he commanded the Leningrad Military District. In fact, as we know, Tukhachevsky was at the head of the Academy of the Red Army in the second half of 1921, just during the period of marriage with Lika, the cousin of Lydia Nord, so the awareness of the latter, whose husband was also studying at the academy at that time, is quite understandable. Feldman's widow states:

"Things didn't go so smoothly for Tukhachevsky. He wasn't particularly liked at the academy. He burst in there with his rebellious nature, like a tornado bursts into a stagnant backwater. "Why do students come to classes at random? he asked his assistant on the first day of his arrival. - If they are senior and top commanders, then the more discipline should be clear to them. Here is a military educational institution, and not a privileged private boarding school for girls. "The new head of the academy visited the classes of all the teachers ... He was present at several military games. He did not make a single remark, but he left the academy with a frown."

There was something to frown on Tukhachevsky. After all, he advocated completely different principles of military theory and practice than most academic professors. Back in 1919, within the walls of the same academy, Mikhail Nikolayevich stated in his first lecture:

"Our Russian generals failed to know the civil war, failed to master its forms. Only a very few generals of the White Guard, capable and imbued with class bourgeois self-consciousness, proved to be at the height of their business. "something like a small war or commissar guerrilla warfare. However, despite such ominous assertions, we see before us not a small war, but a large planned war, almost millions of armies, imbued with a single idea and performing brilliant maneuvers. And in the ranks of this army among its A certain doctrine of this war, and with it, its theoretical substantiation, began to take shape among the loyal leaders born of the civil war, and with it, its theoretical justification ... Revolutionary reality opened our eyes to the significance of a large, organized war (in contrast to a guerrilla war, unorganized, largely spontaneous. - B. C.) for

cause of the liberation of the proletariat... The study of the foundations and laws of the civil war is a matter of the communist program..." Russian generals and colonels, who formed the backbone

The overwhelming majority of the teaching staff of the academy were guided by the experience of not the civil, but the First World War, and in accordance with it they were going to build a military doctrine and train students. Tukhachevsky, on the other hand, made the main emphasis on the increased maneuverability inherent in a civil war as the main feature of a future war, assuming only that this maneuverability would increase even more due to the saturation of the troops with equipment. In practice in

World War II bizarrely combined the features of a war of maneuver and a positional war, when solid lines of a positional front were broken through with the help of artillery, tank and mechanized formations and aviation. The front of the struggle was constantly moving in one direction or another, and these movements were fast and large-scale.

character and were accompanied by the destruction of significant masses of the troops of the defeated army. But in the early 1920s it was still impossible to foresee all this.

Lydia Nord notes that Tukhachevsky not only strengthened discipline at the academy, got rid of weak teachers and streamlined the life of students (in particular, by personally inspecting the pots and boilers in the kitchen and ordering everything to be brought into line with sanitary standards). He introduced a more complex program. His sister-in-law said that, having familiarized themselves with the new notes, both teachers and students became discouraged, since Tukhachevsky demanded more and tougher than the previous boss:

"The only thing that, perhaps, reconciled them with Tukhachevsky was the fact that the hours allotted for them for political studies were very curtailed. But the teachers of political science were depressed, as their lecture earnings decreased."

Subordinates grumbled at the demanding boss. But their wives idolized Mikhail Nikolayevich. According to Lydia Nord, the spouses of the teachers treated Tukhachevsky very favorably, defended him from attacks in front of their husbands and considered him "the most charming person in the world." The commander's sister-in-law claimed that things went even further:

"The ladies, having made Tukhachevsky their idol, were not content with this. Everyone wanted this idol to belong only to her. The beauties, whose youth had already passed, but "the rooks had not yet flown away", competed with each other. The ladies were preparing for the upcoming traditional academic ball, husbands' wallets were emptied, a "saving mode" was set in the house, and the famous dressmaker, who sewed "according to foreign magazines", created such a queue that she stopped recording.

No one wanted to lose face in front of the "most charming" commander of the Red Army. Here one recalls the great novel by Gabriel Garcia Marquez "One Hundred Years of Solitude", where the mothers brought their daughters to the legendary leader of the rebels, Colonel Aureliano Buendia. And not at all from a novel, but from life - Napoleon's numerous love affairs. It can be seen that the famous commanders have some kind of demonic power and attract women to them like a magnet.

Lydia Nord wonders: did Tukhachevsky have real, deep novels? And he answers it like this:

"Perhaps not. I say "perhaps" because sometimes it was very difficult to understand him ... And because I knew that he hid the most precious thing for him in the depths of his soul, and sometimes even ridiculed in words ... I know one thing : Hobbies ended with him very quickly. I have the impression that he was looking for something in women and did not find. "You know, but there is something in her," he told me, pointing to a very beautiful woman. Usually then he began to court, but in most cases the flirtation ended quickly and he said: "She turned out to be an ordinary chicken."

According to Lydia Nord, one of the longest and, as she

it seemed that Tukhachevsky had platonic novels with a certain Maria Nikolaevna H. The memoirist describes her like this:

"Blonde, with dark eyebrows and a long slit of gray-blue eyes wide apart. She had a Greek, but a little heavy profile, a smooth hairstyle and a "swan neck" ... She could not be called a real beauty, but there really is "something" in her it was. "She kept herself very modest, she was married and her husband adored her ... Tukhachevsky could not stand women who were vulgar and dressed without taste. "When I met her the second time, she was wearing such a dress that I almost screamed in horror and all my interest in her evaporated at that very moment, "he shared with me. Or:" While she was standing seemed attractive, but when she went, she swayed her hips so vulgarly, I hastened to turn away, not to look after her. Tukhachevsky's star flared up brighter, the more women swirled around him. Then Mikhail Nikolaevich began to show pampering and even panache ... "

But it was not only the prominent position occupied by the young victor of Kolchak and Denikin. According to the surviving testimonies, Tukhachevsky was an unsurpassed lover. The American historian Thomas Batson cites the story of one surviving prisoner of the Gulag. Once, at the end of the 1930s, in a special camp for wives, daughters and other relatives of high-ranking "enemies of the people", during a break between work, several women came together and, in order to somehow brighten up the poverty of the camp existence, they began to remember their lovers. And at the end of this almost Kafkaesque conversation, one elderly woman scornfully exclaimed: "Ah, girls, what do you know about lovers? I knew the greatest lover of all, Marshal Tukhachevsky. That was a man! A lover to all lovers!" And the denouement of this episode was painted with "black humor": the unfortunate woman began to describe the prowess of Mikhail Nikolayevich so seductively that her companions began to giggle loudly. It got to the guards, and the narrator received four years of an additional sentence ... for praising the enemy of the people! How to know if that woman was Tukhachevsky's second wife, Lika? True, according to Lydia Nord, by that time her cousin was not yet thirty-five, so it was rather difficult to call her elderly. Although the tests suffered - arrest, camp - could easily age a woman. Moreover, Lika really ended up in the camp after the execution of her first husband, although she had been married for a long time and, according to Lydia Nord, did not maintain any ties with the future "enemy of the people". According to the study "Soviet Secret Police" published in 1957 in the United States, based on the testimony of KGB defectors and former camp inmates who got out of the USSR, in a special section of Potmalag, intended for wives and relatives of "enemies of the people", were kept, among others, two wives of Tukhachevsky, as well as Feldman's wife (Lydia Nord?). Let's make a reservation that, judging by the portrait painted by her sister, Lika was not one of those who would publicly discuss the sexual merits of her husband, albeit a former one. Of course, in the camp her psychological state almost certainly underwent significant changes, but still ... Yes, and among the wives and sisters of "enemies of the people" from among the ruling elite, I think there would be many women who would talk about Tukhachevsky as the greatest lover of all time and

peoples.

Tukhachevsky, it seems, never found a woman whom he could truly love, forever, and so that she could also love him. Maybe that's why he changed mistresses, gave himself up to brief hobbies,

that he did not find the one and only ... But no matter how significant the role women played in Tukhachevsky's life, the army remained the main thing for him. He dreamed of establishing his views on the nature of a future war as official and eventually leading the process of reforming the armed forces, as a result of which the Red Army was to become the most powerful army in the world.

During Tukhachevsky's stay at the academy, a discussion began to unfold about what strategy should be followed in the event of a war: offensive or defensive, "strategy of crushing" or "strategy of attrition"? An ardent supporter of the latter was one of the professors of the academy, former Major General A. A. Svechin, an authoritative military theorist who also headed the commission on the use of the experience of the First World War. Tukhachevsky, on the contrary, advocated the dominance of an offensive maneuvering strategy, which involved the defeat of the enemy with several powerful blows. As a result of a conflict with the new chief, Svechin soon left the academy, which did not prevent him from releasing the capital work "Strategy" in 1923, where the former general defended his views and, in particular, the primacy of strategic defense as the basis for the subsequent transition to the offensive against the exhausted and weakened enemy. In 1924, in the preface to the anthology he compiled of the works of military classics, mainly supporters of "starvation", Svechin warned:

"War is long months of labor, deprivation and sacrifice; the troops evenly pull their strap; but they must understand that there are times when it is necessary to harvest the harvest that is the fruit of all these efforts. One day, says the peasant in his everyday life, feeds the year. Tactics plows and sows, harvesting is a matter of strategy. If you forget about the harvest, then you shouldn't even be engaged in farming ... "

Later, in 1927, Svechin emphasized that

"for the success of the defense, you need to be able to lose territory."

The idea is absolutely sound. This is exactly what the Poles did in 1920, and as a result they created a "miracle on the Vistula". However, Tukhachevsky was for the war mainly on foreign territory, and better - with the least losses, and for this he proposed to properly train fighters and commanders and saturate the army with weapons and equipment. He looked at the future war as a civil war, only now on a global scale. He hoped that the proletariat of Western Europe would help the fraternal Red Army and that it would be possible to reap a bountiful harvest very soon. True, things turned out differently in the Second World War, but in the early 1920s, hopes for a world revolution had not yet faded. The reappointment of Tukhachevsky to the Western Front was largely due to the calculation that a revolution was about to break out in Germany (which the Bolshevik leaders seriously expected in 1922-1923).

Interestingly, in the discussion between the supporters of the strategy of exhaustion and crushing, the chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic, Trotsky, was on the side of the former. On XI party congress in 1922, he argued that

a future war, unlike a civil one, may well become a positional war, like the First World War, and the Red Army, inferior to the enemy in weapons, equipment and the development of communications, will have to

defend for a long time. Trotsky tried to convince the congress delegates that the winner is not the one who always attacks first, but the one who attacks when all the necessary prerequisites for the offensive have been created. And in anticipation of this favorable moment, a long and difficult defense will have to be waged. Since potential adversaries, having an advantage in military equipment and transport, can quickly mobilize and concentrate their armies, the Soviet troops, as Trotsky believed, in the initial period of the war will almost certainly have to not only defend themselves, but also retreat, buying time to concentrate all their forces and funds. Lev Davidovich insisted:

"Having space and numbers behind us, we calmly and confidently outline the line where, secured by our elastic defense, mobilization will prepare a sufficient fist for our transition to the offensive."

It was like looking into the water! Nineteen years later, in 1941, the events at the beginning of the Great Patriotic War developed exactly according to this scenario. But then the Red Army was preparing only for the offensive, for the invasion of Poland and Germany, Romania and Finland, and not for defense, and Hitler's attack took it by surprise. In the end, "having space and numbers behind it," the Soviet Union won this most bloody war in the history of mankind. However, how many victims could have been avoided if the Red Army had prepared the defense and retreat in advance and conducted it deliberately, without being carried away by offensive adventures and unrealizable hopes of crushing such a powerful enemy as the German Wehrmacht, "with little blood, with a mighty blow." If only they had listened to Svechin and Trotsky! But the political fate of the latter was already sealed. With his departure from the post of chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council in January 1925, supporters of an offensive strategy aimed at crushing the enemy finally gained the upper hand. This strategy was followed by both the new head of the military department, Frunze, and Tukhachevsky, who was nominated by him to the Headquarters of the Red Army, and Voroshilov, who became Frunze's deputy, an antagonist of Tukhachevsky since the Warsaw operation.

Svechin was arrested back in 1930, then released, and shot after the death of Tukhachevsky, in the 38th, as part of a campaign of terror against military personnel, provoked by the trial of the youngest of the Soviet marshals. The fates of irreconcilable opponents turned out to be the same. But in the days of the fall of Svechin, Tukhachevsky did not know this. And on April 25, 1931, when Alexander Andreevich tried to earn his early release by hard work at a logging site, at a meeting of the military section of the Leningrad branch of the Communist Academy, he attacked the defeated general staff theorist, who "consciously or unconsciously ... is an agent of the intervention of imperialism" and "in fact leads the Red Army to defeat." Oh, if only Tukhachevsky knew that six years later, exactly the same, almost word for word, accusations would be made against him.

Tukhachevsky, like Frunze and Voroshilov, believed that the Red Army should strive to preempt potential opponents and be the first to go on the offensive. Back in 1921, in the article "Training of Troops"

wrote:

"The workers and peasants must know that the Soviet government will exert every effort and means to avoid new wars, but they must

to realize that the class enemies of Soviet Russia are just waiting for an opportunity to attack her with the least possible losses and strangle the hated workers' state. And if so, then military training should not be forgotten behind peaceful labor. If so, then every working man in Soviet Russia must be prepared not to expect a capitalist attack when war is declared on us, but, on the contrary, to pounce on the enemies who are ready to attack, overthrow them and bring the banner of socialist war onto bourgeois territory.

Tukhachevsky urged to prepare for such a war "both spiritually, technically and physically." He regulated this preparation in the theses "On the aims of the war, on the inevitability of revolutionary explosions in the bourgeois states that have declared war on us (Tukhachevsky implied that the bourgeoisie had actually declared war on the Soviet Republic since the victory of the October Revolution. - B. S.), about the combination of socialist offensives with these explosions, about the atrophy of national feelings and about the development of class consciousness and solidarity ...".

Mikhail Nikolaevich drew attention to the need for the gradual introduction of one-man command. Tukhachevsky proposed two ways - the transformation of some of the commissars, after appropriate training, into commanders and the endowment of the most trustworthy commanders with commissar functions. He emphasized:

"Especially attention should be paid to the fact that commanders should get used to dividing commanding bodies into specialists and commissars. They should feel both morally and actually responsible for the training of their unit, and not only in military-technical terms (that is, in the sphere of mastering the techniques warfare. - B. S.), but also in relation to its consciously revolutionary development. Another important task is the training and transfer of commissars to command positions. "

At that time, in the words of Tukhachevsky, "the ideas of an anemic war" were promoted, that is, a semi-guerrilla war based on delivering a series of quick, short blows to the enemy with small forces, in the expectation that under their influence the enemy would disintegrate. Mikhail Nikolayevich attacked one of the apologists for this theory, Army Commander N. N. Petin, in an article under the title "War of the Bedbugs" that destroyed the opponent, published in 1923. Tukhachevsky admitted that "it is very rarely possible to destroy the enemy army with one blow. Most often this is achieved by a series of destroying operations." He pointed out that we might not be talking about the disintegration of the entire enemy army as such at the very beginning of an armed conflict, but only about the disintegration of its remnants as a result of "the destruction of its main, decisive part", moreover, it "must not only be reckoned with, but and must be cultivated." However, Tukhachevsky rightly noted, "a good enemy will not decompose from a private blow, but will maneuver and impose the first number on his generous agitator." He considered it unlawful to transfer the forms and methods of "people's war" on the model of the struggle against Napoleon's "Great Army" in 1812 to modern conditions. Today, Tukhachevsky warned, a small guerrilla war would turn out to be a war

"Not anemic, but cruel and bloody. This war is waged by the entire population, figuratively speaking, it is waged by the entire territory. The enemy army that has entered it is surrounded, in the most unpleasant dismembered environment by the enemy, invisible, dexterous and cruel.

With separate blows, attacks, he undermines the material forces of the army, forces it to scatter along its communications, and all the more worsens its position. Gradually, the army is melting away, and the need to end the occupation grows. For a regular army, this is one of the most difficult positions."

Nevertheless, Mikhail Nikolayevich was sure that such "bug bites" would be ineffective when there was a struggle

"two organized armies facing each other, reliably covering their rear."

Indeed, in this case

"Individual bites do not destroy the system of the entire material force of the enemy army, and therefore, there will be no moral disintegration of it, because such is a derivative of the material state."

And here Tukhachevsky formulated his philosophy of war:

"The approach to an operation as a struggle between two wills, as an impact on the "psyche of the crowd" on both sides, is the most harmful military idealism. An operation is the organization of the struggle of each of the armies to destroy the living, material force of the other. Not the destruction of the imaginary, abstract "nervous system" of the army should be the operational goal, and the destruction of the real organism - the troops and the real nervous system of army communication.

The future marshal, in fact, considered the military machine of each side as a giant organism akin to a human.

Tukhachevsky treated defense as such as a secondary type of hostilities. In a special article of the year 23 "On Defense", he put forward a very original theory why positional defense prevailed almost until the very end of the First World War:

"One of the most important reasons for the general lull after the first thunderstorm was the unpreparedness of industry for the mass production of means of destruction. These funds were not enough, and in order to produce them, it took a long time, because it was necessary to reshape the entire industry for this. At the same time, the productive forces warring countries, supplying means of protection, were immediately at the right height. This is understandable - wire and concrete are equally needed for both war and peace. Within four years, industry adapted to the production of means of destruction, and only in 1918 did it finally militarized, and at the same time, positionalism began to evaporate.

It will not be so, Tukhachevsky believed, in the war of the future. Powerful means of attack, such as tanks and aircraft, will be accumulated by the parties ahead of time and will not allow a solid positional defense to be created.

I note right away that Tukhachevsky here, voluntarily or involuntarily, distorts the real practice of the world war that has just ended. In fact, already in 1916, the industry of almost all participating countries was completely transferred to the war footing. Such a new means of combat as aircraft was actively used from the first months of hostilities. As for tanks, having appeared for the first time in 1917, they were really used in mass quantities at the front only in

18th and helped the Allies break through the German positions. However, the designs of tanks were imperfect, and the principles of their combat use were not developed. And these formidable but clumsy machines could not play a decisive role in the outcome of the war. In fact, the victory of England, France and the United States was caused by the onset of exhaustion of the forces of Germany and its allied powers and marked the triumph of the "starvation strategy" against which Tukhachevsky fought. He also tried to explain the outcome of the First World War in terms of a "strategy of destruction."

According to Tukhachevsky,

"future military clashes ... due to the organization and size of the armies of our possible adversaries, will be of a maneuverable nature, that is, decisive and overwhelming ... The desire for decisive clashes will require bold, dense groupings in decisive directions and bold exposure of areas of unimportant, connecting :

The troops of the connecting sectors in unimportant directions will usually defend themselves, and if there is a lack of forces, they will sometimes retreat. On the other hand, in the decisive direction, our troops, superior in strength, will bring death and defeat to their enemy. The only thing that the shock troops will require from the connecting areas is the gain of time, allowing them to complete the defeat of the enemy.

The bolder the grouping, the faster the denouement will follow, the easier the task of the defenders will become. This progressive lowering of the requirements for connecting areas makes the position of the defenders all the safer, the more the shock ram becomes stronger at their expense. Such is the significance of defense in the strategic sense in the future wars."

Well written, energetic. But - it was smooth on paper, but they forgot about the ravines ... Did Tukhachevsky learn nothing from the defeat near Warsaw, when the "troops of the connecting sector" represented by the Mozyr group were easily shot down and dispersed by the counterattacking grouping of the Poles, and as a result, the "shock troops" of the Western front, instead of "bringing death and defeat to their enemy," were partly interned and partly captured? And at that moment, in 1923, the Red Army did not have the forces and means for a powerful offensive with decisive goals. Its number was reduced from 5 million to 516 thousand people, artillery, a few airplanes and armored vehicles were very worn out, and the prospects for their production in the USSR were rather vague. At one time, Pilsudski quite rightly pointed out to Tukhachevsky that the latter's reasoning in the "Campaign for the Vistula" about "ram masses" supposed to crush the Polish defense near Warsaw is nothing more than a poetic exaggeration, since the armies that make up the ram, in terms of numbers and firepower, are not exceed full-fledged divisions of the period of the First World War. But even in relation to the post-war development of the Red Army, Mikhail Nikolayevich continued to operate with abstractions from the future, which could not be immediately implemented. Numerous, trained, equipped with new military equipment, "shock troops" had yet to be created.

Tukhachevsky considered the most suitable type of defense to be passive defense, which "wins time and saves strength as much as possible." The idea of active, or, in later terminology, "elastic defense", he rejected from the threshold, arguing:

"Passive defense is the element of courage, and active defense is the element

timid decision,

although he himself became a victim of an active defense on the Vistula, that is, associated with a deliberate retreat and counterattack on the attackers, defense by the enemy. The commander of the Western Front believed that, since

"he who defends himself when his front is broken through is much more shocked and confused than the one who has broken through,"

That

"counterattacking reserves are morally in a worse position than the one who broke through."

In addition, Tukhachevsky emphasized,

"After all, the one who breaks through is stronger than the defender ... and numerically, the counterattack loses."

From this he concluded:

"You shouldn't count on the strength of deep reserves. It's better to strengthen the battle line in every possible way ... Active actions of deep reserves will not bring any benefit ... It's better for them to limit themselves to occupying a new fortified zone in the rear, plugging the hole that has formed."

The Red Army was preparing for an offensive, for a "preemptive strike." Therefore, Tukhachevsky preferred not to remember whose morale on the Vistula turned out to be stronger: the counterattack Polish group or the weak Soviet troops opposing it. And he still neglected questions of defense, hoping that in a future war it would not be necessary to defend for a long time, and even more so to defend along the entire front. Frunze, Voroshilov, and many other military leaders thought the same way. The line of Trotsky and Svechin on the primacy of strategic defense for the Red Army was defamed and consigned to oblivion.

The practice of the Great Patriotic War proved that Tukhachevsky was wrong. For more than a year, the Red Army had to defend itself along the entire front. And later, when the strategic initiative passed to it, individual armies and even army groups had to fight heavy defensive battles, including in the victorious 45th. The experience of the Second World War and a number of subsequent military conflicts also confirmed the effectiveness of active defense based on counterattacks in pre-selected areas against an enemy that has broken through.

Lydia Nord cites in her memoirs a remarkable conversation between Tukhachevsky and Frunze, which apparently took place when Mikhail Nikolayevich was commander of the Western Front. Tukhachevsky outlined his plan to reform the Red Army to Frunze.

"That's great!" Frunze said approvingly. "I thought so myself, but not on such a scale. How much time will you need for this?" - "Not so much - a year and a half," Tukhachevsky answered, "but on the condition that they don't put sticks in my wheels all the time ..." - "Is it me, or what?" - He laughed

Frunze. "No, not you. But, for example, I don't have enough people, especially artillerymen, who could be appointed to the positions of regiment and brigade commanders. Moscow does not want to approve the candidates nominated by me, because they are former officers and non-party people. They offer me for these positions from "party thousand members", but you yourself know what kind of cadres they turned out - out of a thousand you can't find a dozen real sensible commanders. And besides, they don't have that knowledge ... "

After a pause, Tukhachevsky continued:

"Don't think that I'm going to join the opposition. The disputes and squabbles of our theoreticians, in fact, do not touch me much. But when people who own only such a "weapon" as a knife for cutting books, or a penknife, suddenly come out with their remarks how it is necessary to rebuild and arm the army, then I feel that my bile is ready to overflow ... And the most disgusting thing is that such ignorant arguments are supported, out of obvious sycophancy, by some old General Staff officers. Do you remember then, at a solemn meeting at the Academy, when Stalin decided to show off his education and got confused in military history, how Zayonchkovsky rescued him: "Comrade Stalin revealed the cause extremely deeply." After that, I met Zayonchkovsky in the corridor and told him: "Aren't you ashamed, general?" And he, as always, a fox: "Humor, you know, adorns life. After all, no one thought, except himself, that I said this seriously ... "

"Be careful with him," Frunze warned. "I reprimanded him once. He immediately became so agitated that I even felt embarrassed. I shouldn't have gotten so excited, I think he's older than me and an excellent specialist. He tried to smooth everything over. And After that, he is always kind to me, even once indulging in unnecessary frankness. A month passes, and by chance, in a conversation with S. S. Kamenev, I find out that he complained to him about me. Almost the next day .. Recently I met Valeryan Kuibyshev, and he said to me: "Yes, Stalin asked me to tell you to treat Zayonchkovsky more gently - he is an honest and tireless worker." Well, I told Kuibyshev everything ... But in general, we from "We shouldn't hang our heads for all this. We have more friends than enemies... We'll do our job - we'll have such an army that the world will gasp. Let's drink to it!"

Not in vain, oh, not in vain did Mikhail Vasilyevich warn his friend and namesake Mikhail Nikolaevich! Andrei Medardovich Zayonchkovsky, who rose to the high rank of general of infantry in the tsarist army, unsuccessfully commanded a corps on the Romanian front, but wrote the history of the First World War, which remains the best in Russia today, was a longtime secret collaborator of the Cheka and the OGPU. The daughter followed in the footsteps of her father, whose denunciations played a sinister role in the undercover development of the NKVD of Tukhachevsky and other military leaders.

In November 1925, Tukhachevsky became Chief of Staff of the Red Army. Although this appointment followed after the death of Frunze during an operation for a stomach ulcer (contemporaries suspected that he was deliberately killed on Stalin's secret order), the issue of this appointment was resolved in principle during his lifetime. By the way, according to the testimony of I. A. Telyatnikov, Tukhachevsky proposed his friend Sergo Ordzhonikidze as a successor to Mikhail Vasilyevich, but Stalin easily achieved that at the head of the military

Departments stood up completely devoted to him and, unlike Ordzhonikidze, did not play any independent role in the Voroshilov party. The latter, obviously, knew about Tukhachevsky's opposition to his appointment, and relations between them were very difficult from the very beginning.

Tukhachevsky received more opportunities to implement his plans, however, hostility from the new People's Commissar for Military and Naval Affairs made it difficult for him to work as Chief of Staff of the Red Army. In his 1926 work Questions of Modern Strategy,

Mikhail Nikolaevich called the task of "militaryization" of the country the most important task, believing that central planning allows the USSR to "squeeze out a larger percentage of military production" than in capitalist countries, and to ensure that the economy is not destroyed by the need to switch to war footing. Tukhachevsky remarked:

"No one yet knows how to maneuver with all the resources of the country, and our workers should know this maneuver as well as they know the field driving of troops."

In fact, in full accordance with the line of Stalin and the majority of the Politburo, he advocated the militarization of the country in peacetime and the subordination of the entire economy to the needs of the country's defense, the practical mobilization of industry even before the outbreak of hostilities. It was in those years that the monster of the Soviet military-industrial complex was born, which even today puts pressure on the Russian economy with huge hidden unemployment and dead capital investments. It began in the second half of the 1920s, with the adoption by the party congress of the course towards accelerated industrialization (of course, the congress resolutions did not directly mention its predominantly military goals). Tukhachevsky emphasized that the course of the KhMPPU congress was aimed at raising the country's military potential, but he warned that one should not "take the future achievements of our socialist construction for the real achievements of today." And at the same time he called for "foreseeing the future," which he himself tried to do in his articles and speeches.

And in the same Questions of Modern Strategy, Tukhachevsky, still believing that the Red Army in a future war would mainly have to attack, and not defend, expressed very sound thoughts.

"It must be borne in mind," he warned, "that in modern conditions of warfare, it is very often not possible to achieve the destruction of the enemy with one operation. The enemy often escapes from the blow. Therefore, one has to carry out operations one after another in order to finish the enemy at least at the last line of his resistance. And this line is located where the districts that feed the war begin.

From this came the conclusion:

"We must reckon with the fact that we are facing hard, long wars..."

This prediction was fully confirmed during the Second World War, when the resistance of the Wehrmacht ceased only after the Allied troops occupied almost the entire territory of Germany, including the capital. And one more conclusion of Tukhachevsky is quite relevant today:

"The art of destroying the armed forces of the enemy is the basic condition for the economical and successful conduct of war, and in this art, as in all the art of strategy, we must constantly improve."

And in the 1927 article "Tasks of Combined Arms Training", the Chief of Staff of the Red Army formulated:

"The basic tactical principle is to act according to the situation."

He was a supporter of the fact that the commanders were given the necessary independence both in exercises and in real combat conditions. Although here, too, the characteristic of Tukhachevsky appeared

voluntarism. It is no coincidence that Mikhail Nikolaevich emphasized:

"It is extremely harmful and dangerous to allow a commander to react frivolously to changes in the situation. On the contrary, perseverance and perseverance in achieving the entire task is often able to overcome any unfavorable circumstances in the situation that is developing in connection with the change." Similar sentiments were widespread in the Red Army in the 1920s and even later. For example, the former Lieutenant General of the White Army Ya. A. Slashchov, who recognized Soviet power and taught tactics at the Shot command courses, defended the same idea in his lectures as Tukhachevsky: "In battle, hold firmly to your decision - let it will be worse than the other, but persistently carried out, it will give victory, while hesitation will lead to defeat."

Thus, near Warsaw, the commander of the Western Front, with perseverance worthy of a better application, continued to carry out his plan of deep coverage of the Polish capital from the north when all the riskiness of the position of his open southern flank was already indicated. How it ended is well known.

Tukhachevsky remained in the post of Chief of Staff of the Red Army until May 1928. The reason for his departure from this post was the constant conflicts with Voroshilov. For example, on April 5, 1928, Tukhachevsky wrote to the Commissar: "I consider it necessary to report two main points that make the work of the Headquarters of the Red Army completely abnormal ... First of all, in both current and planned work, such a situation is created that it can often seem that you, as People's Commissar, you work on your own, and the Headquarters of the Red Army on its own, which is completely unnatural, since, in essence, the headquarters should be a working apparatus in your hands to unite all parties and work to prepare for the war. If it is not such an apparatus, that means it's not okay." A few days later, on April 16, Voroshilov received another letter, or rather, a denunciation of Tukhachevsky signed by Budyonny, Yegorov and Dybenko, where the chief of staff of the Red Army was accused of allegedly withdrawing himself from directing the work of the headquarters and not corresponding to his position. In the end, Mikhail Nikolaevich realized that all his initiatives to rearm the troops and reorganize the military authorities were being blocked by the people's commissar, and filed a report on his dismissal.

He was appointed commander of the Leningrad Military District, where

the chief of staff was his friend B. M. Feldman, the husband of Mikhail Nikolayevich's sister-in-law. By that time, Tukhachevsky was married for the third time. While still in Smolensk, he married Nina Evgenievna Grinevich, who came from a noble family. Before that, she was married to political worker Lazar Naumovich Aronshtam, who later rose to the high rank of army commissar of the 2nd rank and shared the sad fate of his successful rival in 1938. Their daughter Svetlana was also born there. The wife loved Tukhachevsky, who, however, did not always keep marital fidelity. Short-term romances happened from time to time. A longer one was established with Yulia Kuzmina, who had a daughter from Tukhachevsky. Yulia Ivanovna and Mikhail Nikolaevich met during the second move of Mikhail Nikolaevich to Moscow in 1924. Julia divorced her husband. Despite this, Kuzmin and Tukhachevsky retained

friendly relations, and Mikhail Nikolayevich contributed to the career of Nikolai Nikolayevich. Tukhachevsky was able to arrange an apartment in Moscow for his mistress and daughter, and then he took with him to Leningrad, where he also secured an apartment.

In the last months of Tukhachevsky's life, Lidia Shatunovskaya, the adopted daughter of an old Bolshevik, who lived in the same government house with the Tukhachevskys, met his third wife, after the publication of Yuri Trifonov's story, popularly known as "the house on the embankment" (and also as the "Indian tomb" - from - for the abundance of memorial plaques installed on it in honor of celebrities who, as a rule, did not survive the 37th-38th years). The acquaintance happened at the English language courses organized by the "female asset" at home. Nina Evgenievna was going to London with her husband for the coronation of King George VI and wanted to learn the language so as not to be a silent statue at receptions. Shatunovskaya, like Lydia Nord, who ended up in the West, in her memoirs *Life in the Kremlin*, gives a very sympathetic portrait of the one who was soon to become Tukhachevsky's widow and only briefly survive the executed marshal:

"Nina came to me several times, we studied English together and got to know each other well. She was a very pretty, graceful, soft woman. everyone knew that, in addition to the official family, Tukhachevsky had another, secret family, that from his second, unofficial wife, he had a daughter of the same age as Nina's daughter (the connection was not very secret, it turns out Tukhachevsky with Yulia Kuzmina, if "everyone knew"; most importantly, the NKVD was very well aware of Tukhachevsky's "official mistress", or "unofficial wife", and kept her "under the hood" - B. S.). Both of these girls they had the same name. Both were Svetlanas."

Apparently, Mikhail Nikolayevich was not indifferent to this name, he wanted his daughters to have a bright fate, and both had camps ahead ... In the 37th, Svetlana Tukhachevskaya was thirteen, and Svetlana Kuzmina was eleven years old ...

The trip to London did not take place, and cohabitation with Kuzmina became a pretext for removing Tukhachevsky from a high post, followed by arrest and death. But we're getting ahead of ourselves a little...

Let's go back to the first, happier years of marriage. About them and about N.E.

Grinevich-Tukhachevsky was recalled by L.V. Guseva, the wife of the commander of the Red Army, who served with Tukhachevsky in Smolensk:

"We turned out to be neighbors with the Tukhachevskys at home. So I met, and then made friends for life with the wife of Mikhail Nikolayevich, an intelligent, tactful, endearing young woman, Nina Evgenievna. She introduced me to her close, albeit very extensive family circle ... The Tukhachevsky house became especially attractive with the transfer of Mikhail Nikolayevich to Moscow (in the 1920s, the entire Tukhachevsky family, including his mother, brothers and sisters, lived in a large apartment on Nikolskaya Street. - B. S.) What kind of people met there "How often wonderful music sounded! .. Mikhail Nikolaevich and Nina Evgenievna knew how to create an atmosphere of ease. Each of them felt at ease, freely, could openly express his thoughts without fear of being interrupted or offended."

It is unlikely that all those who visited the Tukhachevskys knew at what cost Nina, a bright and kind woman (none of the memoirists, either in the USSR or in the West, said a single bad word about her!), This lightness and cordiality. It can be seen that she really loved Mikhail or tried to save the marriage for the sake of her daughter ...

Tukhachevsky maintained close ties with his relatives until the end of his life, settled his mother, brothers and sisters in his Moscow apartment. In this he markedly differed for the better from many other military leaders of the Red Army. For example, Marshal A. M. Vasilevsky, being the son of a priest, in 1926, when he had to enter the higher command courses "Shot", without hesitation broke off contact with his parents. And already in the 70s he did not hesitate to describe this story in detail in his memoirs with the inspirational title "The Work of All Life". Once in the 40th year, at a banquet, Stalin offered a toast to Vasilevsky's health and asked why he did not go to the priests after the seminary ". The embarrassed brigade commander replied that neither he nor his father had such a desire. Stalin grinned:

"So, so. You didn't have such a desire. It's clear. But Mikoyan and I wanted to become priests, but for some reason they didn't take us. Why, we still don't understand." And then he asked quite seriously: "Tell me, please, why you, and your brothers, do not help your father financially at all? .. I think that all of you could help your parents, then the old man would not now, but long ago he would have his church. He needed it to somehow exist. "

Discouraged, Vasilevsky confessed:

"Since 1926, I have severed all ties with my parents. And if I had acted differently, then, apparently, not only would I not have been in the ranks of our party, but I would hardly have served in the ranks of the Workers 'and Peasants' Red Army, and even more so in system of the General Staff..."

Stalin and other members of the Politburo showed surprise on their faces. Iosif Vissarionovich ordered Vasilevsky to immediately restore contact with his father and provide financial assistance to him. A few years later, Stalin "advised" to take his sick father to Moscow, which Vasilevsky and fulfilled.

Yes, in a person who, for the sake of a career, was ready to renounce his parents and who, in order to help his aged father,

the sanction of the leader was required, Stalin could be quite sure. Therefore, he brought Vasilevsky closer to himself and, until his death, kept Alexander Mikhailovich in the post of Minister of War. Such generals and marshals (and they were the majority in the Red Army) could not make truly independent, non-standard decisions, and they bought victories only at the cost of great sacrifices.

Tukhachevsky was not like that, he did not renounce his family and the nobility (and the family did not renounce him later). Of course, here Mikhail Nikolayevich played into the hands of both the peasant origin of his mother and joining the party twenty years earlier than Vasilevsky. But it seems that family ties meant no less to Tukhachevsky than the marshal's baton, and he would hardly have renounced his mother or his own spiritual independence for the sake of a career. Imagine that in a conversation with Stalin, Tukhachevsky would have been in Vasilevsky's place, it is simply impossible. And Stalin felt it. Aspiring to independence from the dictator in solving purely military or personal problems, the commander was,

basically doomed. In Leningrad, Tukhachevsky did not calm down and continued to build large-scale plans for transformation. On January 11, 1930, he submitted a report on the reorganization of the Red Army to People's Commissar Voroshilov, where he argued:

"The successes of our socialist construction ... put before us in full growth the task of reconstructing the Armed Forces on the basis of taking into account all the latest factors of technology and the possibility of mass military-technical production, as well as the shifts that have taken place in the countryside (this is how Mikhail Nikolaevich delicately called the forced collectivization of the peasantry, which led to mass starvation. - B.S.) ... The reconstructed army will also call for new forms of operational art. "

Tukhachevsky proposed to increase the size of the army, as well as the number of artillery, aviation and tanks. This was supposed to guarantee the victory of the USSR in a future world war. Voroshilov delivered the letter to Stalin on March 5, 1930, with the following comment:

"I am sending for review a copy of Tukhachevsky's letter (that's right, even without the sacramental "comrade", which is mandatory in official documents when mentioning party members; this alone speaks enough about the attitude of the people's commissar towards Tukhachevsky. - B. S.) and a certificate from the headquarters on this occasion. Tukhachevsky wants to be original and ... "radical". It's bad that in the Red Army there is a breed of people who take this "radicalism" at face value. I beg you to read both documents and tell me your opinion."

Stalin agreed with Voroshilov and wrote to him on March 23:

"I think that Comrade Tukhachevsky's "plan" is the result of a fashionable passion for "leftist" phrases, the result of a passion for paper, clerical maximalism. That is why analysis is replaced in it by a "game of figures" and the Marxist prospect of the growth of the Red Army is a fantasy. "Such a 'plan' would surely ruin both the country's economy and the army. That would be worse than any counter-revolution..."

Your I. Stalin".

The leader still did not suspect the commander of the Leningrad District

in the counter-revolution and still called him "comrade". This word was worth a lot in the USSR: "enemy of the people", as if in a mockery of civil society, immediately turned into a "citizen".

So, Stalin considered Tukhachevsky's proposals that the planes and tanks in the Red Army would soon number tens of thousands "fantastic" and hypocritically complained that as a result socialism would be replaced by militarism (as if he did not know that the first and all subsequent five-year plans and were aimed at an unprecedented militarization of the country in history).

Having received such a favorable answer from Stalin, Voroshilov prepared a draft letter to Tukhachevsky, mocking in tone and meager in content, since cautious Kliment Efremovich did not dare to add anything of his own to Stalin's opinion:

"I am sending you his (i.e., Stalin's) assessment of your "plan." It is not very flattering ... but, in my deep conviction, it is absolutely correct and deserved by you. I fully subscribe to Comrade Stalin's opinion that acceptance and implementation of your program would be worse than any counter-revolution, because it would inevitably lead to the complete liquidation of socialist construction and its replacement by some kind of

peculiar and, in any case, hostile to the proletariat system of "red militarism".

Voroshilov, however, preferred not to send the letter personally to the addressee, but announced it at an expanded meeting of the Revolutionary Military Council. This outraged Tukhachevsky. On December 30, 1931, he sent a message to Stalin:

"The wording of your letter, read out by Comrade Voroshilov at an expanded meeting of the Revolutionary Military Council of the USSR, completely excludes for me the possibility of bringing up for a wide discussion a number of issues related to the problems of developing our defense capabilities; for example, I was excluded as the head of strategy from the Military Academy of the Red Army, where I taught this subject for six years. And in general, my position in these matters has become extremely false. Meanwhile, I assert as resolutely as before that the Headquarters of the Red Army unprincipledly distorted the proposals of my note ... "

The Chief of Staff of the Red Army at that time was B. M. Shaposhnikov, whose mutual dislike with Tukhachevsky was no less than that of Mikhail Nikolaevich C Kliment Efremovich. A colonel-general staff officer of the tsarist army, he, according to Tukhachevsky, belonged to the category of those military experts in the Red Army who did not understand the new maneuverability brought by the civil war, and generally lagged behind in understanding the features of modern warfare. In 1924, Shaposhnikov, who during the period of the Polish campaign was the head of the operational department of the Field Headquarters of the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic, published the book "On the Vistula", where he placed all responsibility for the "Warsaw embarrassment" solely on Tukhachevsky. Lidia Nord conveys Mikhail Nikolayevich's extremely unflattering review of Boris Mikhailovich. Tukhachevsky, responding to widespread accusations that he had betrayed the tsar's oath and was serving in the Red Army solely out of careerist motives, said something like the following:

"I don't really give a damn about all this talk, but I'm just wondering why only Tukhachevsky is the talk of the town? .. Aya

I know that no one will reproach generals Potapov, Brusilov, Klyuev (actually a lieutenant colonel. - B.S.), Svechin, Zayonchkovsky, Mikhailov, as well as colonels and lieutenant colonels Yegorov, Petin, Schwartz, Shuvaev, Kork, Lazorevich, Sollogub, Shaposhnikov and all the others who joined the Red Army. Why? Didn't they, being generals and staff officers of the tsarist army, do the same thing that I did, being only in the rank of lieutenant? .. And they tell me that I am ambitious. All are ambitious. Yes, and many are selfish in addition. Let's take the respected Boris Mikhailovich Shaposhnikov, with his "bright head and crystal soul." How did he manage, being a colonel of the General Staff and going to the service of the Reds, to maintain innocence? Do not you know? And I know. That's why I don't respect him. So this "crystal soul", meeting after his transition to the Bolsheviks with his old colleagues and some generals from a foreign camp, made them understand that she "does not sympathize with the red bastard at all", but is preparing an internal coup. And they confidentially communicated this to others and said: "Go to Shaposhnikov - this is one of the most decent officers." Then he got out of this situation like a fox - "you see, the power is now so strong that we can't do anything, we have to serve it contrary to our convictions." And he had no "beliefs" and no. He can serve anyone

If only he had a position and the same favorite job. He is an excellent worker, he has knowledge and military talent. But he is not suitable for commander-in-chief - he is an armchair Bonaparte.

Tukhachevsky, obviously, considered himself an ideological supporter of the communists, or at least tried very hard to convince himself of this.

Did the "armchair Bonaparte" really manage to turn Voroshilov and Stalin against Tukhachevsky's proposals, or did Stalin himself play some complicated game with Mikhail Nikolayevich, but the situation suddenly changed. In April 1931, Shaposhnikov was transferred from the chief of staff of the Red Army to the commander of the secondary Volga military district, and in June of the same year Tukhachevsky was appointed chief of armaments of the Red Army. And soon he became deputy chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council and People's Commissar for Military and Naval Affairs. But the attacks against Mikhail Nikolayevich did not stop. In September 31st, the Academy. Frunze published a textbook devoted to the Soviet-Polish war. There, Tukhachevsky's actions as commander of the Western Front were directly called adventurous, which was essentially true. However, such an attack could only be made against the acting deputy people's commissar of defense with Voroshilov's approval. Tukhachevsky realized that clouds were gathering over him again. And in January 32, he sent a new letter to Stalin, where he asked to stop the campaign launched by the people's commissar to discredit him, Tukhachevsky. And soon received the first favorable signal from above.

At the end of 1931, Tukhachevsky sent a letter to Voroshilov proposing to introduce tank units into rifle and cavalry divisions. This proposal was accepted. And in May 1932, Stalin finally sent Tukhachevsky a letter in which he admitted that he had reacted too harshly and unfairly to Tukhachevsky's original note and was now ready to admit that he was right and apologize, albeit belatedly, for the mistake made against Tukhachevsky. Joseph Vissarionovich, although with reservations, repented:

"In my letter addressed to Comrade Voroshilov, as you know, I basically joined the conclusions of our headquarters and spoke sharply negatively about your "note", recognizing it as the fruit of "clerical maximalism", the result of a "game of numbers", etc. That was the case two years ago. Today, two years later, when some obscure questions have become clearer to me, I must admit that my assessment was too harsh, and the conclusions of my letter are not entirely correct ... It seems to me that my letter addressed to Comrade Voroshilov would not have been so harsh in tone and it would have been free from some incorrect conclusions about you if I had then transferred the dispute to this new base. But I did not do this, since, obviously, the problem was not yet clear enough for me. Do not scold me that I undertook to correct the shortcomings of my letter with some delay.

With communist greetings. I. Stalin".

If you wish, you can see in these words a hint that he, Stalin, was misled about the proposals of Tukhachevsky by Voroshilov and Shaposhnikov, and that then, two years ago, the correctness of Mikhail Nikolayevich was not so obvious as now, when the first successes of accelerated industrialization. The main thing is

Stalin really wanted to use Tukhachevsky's military talent and organizational skills to prepare the Red Army for a future war and wanted the new deputy people's commissar of defense to work not out of fear, but out of conscience. That is why he brought a written apology, admitted, albeit partially, that he was wrong. Tukhachevsky, of course, did not know that Iosif Vissarionovich did not forgive anyone for such humiliations, and in the long term the fate of those who received an apology from the Secretary General was a foregone conclusion. It was unbearable for Stalin to realize that someone turned out to be smarter and more far-sighted than him in those areas that the Secretary General considered his main strong points: politics, economics, military affairs. The former Stalinist friend Bukharin, who already foresaw imminent death, spoke about this in Paris in 1936 to the Menshevik F.I. Dan:

"Stalin is even unhappy because he cannot convince everyone, and even himself, that he is greater than everyone else, and this is his misfortune, perhaps the most human trait in him, perhaps the only human trait in him, but no longer human, and there is something diabolical in the fact that for this very "misfortune" he cannot but take revenge on people, all people, and especially those who are somehow higher, better than him ... If someone speaks better than him, he is doomed, he will not leave him alive, because - this man is an eternal reminder to him that he is not the first, not the best; if someone better writes badly his case ... This is a small, evil man, not a man, but the Devil".

Tukhachevsky knew military affairs better than Stalin and knew how to lead troops.

When in the first version of the anniversary article of 1929 "Stalin and the Red Army" Voroshilov allowed himself the general phrase that during the civil war all Soviet leaders

"there were successes and shortcomings", but "JV Stalin had fewer mistakes than others",

the hero of the article left an indignant remark in the margins:

"Klim! There were no mistakes, this paragraph should be thrown out."

And then there's Tukhachevsky, both in the book "The Campaign for the Vistula", and in private conversations, he allows himself to hint that the failure near Warsaw was the result of the refusal of the Revolutionary Military Council of the Southwestern Front in time to transfer the Cavalry to help the Western Front. For the time being, this can be tolerated as long as there is a need for a young commander, but Tukhachevsky will never become a reckless supporter of him, Stalin. This means that the time will come for the Moor to leave when he has done his job - he will launch a program for deploying an army fit for modern warfare. And others will finish their trip to the West ...

Lydia Nord described the reconciliation between Stalin and Tukhachevsky as follows:

"Before Tukhachevsky was appointed Deputy People's Commissar of Defense of the USSR, Stalin had a face-to-face conversation with him. Then their "reconciliation" took place.

Stalin convinced Mikhail Nikolayevich that the delay in the transfer of Budyonny's army to the Polish front (meaning the transfer of the Cavalry from near Lvov to Warsaw. - B.S.) was an "unintentional mistake." He also repented that at first he had little trust in Tukhachevsky, and then began to extol him

"services to the revolution and the strategic talent of a military leader," flooded him with a stream of flattering phrases. On Tukhachevsky, as on any ambitious person, Stalin's flattery worked. He was ready to finally believe in his sincerity ... "

Tukhachevsky's sister-in-law, in her memoirs, also cites an earlier conversation between Tukhachevsky and Stalin, to which she was a witness in the mid-1920s. The case took place in the apartment of V. V. Kuibyshev. At the table, where most of the military, including Frunze and Tukhachevsky, had gathered, the most general social conversation was going on when the bell rang in the hallway and Stalin, "a stocky man of oriental appearance," appeared, accompanied by secretary A. N. Poskrebyshev. As Lydia Nord points out,

"Their appearance did not cause confusion, but no one showed any joy either. "Yes, we, in fact, are on business," the first of those who entered spoke after greeting the owner and quickly ran around with the eyes of those present, "but we did not know that you had guests"

The memoirist continues:

"Before he sat down at the table, he walked around everyone. "Stalin," he said, and held my hand in his wide and hard hand for a few seconds ... The general cheerful conversation somehow immediately broke off. Stalin refused vodka, raising a glass of wine, looked around again at those present, then suddenly got up. "I drink to the memory of our leader and friend Vladimir Ilyich ..." - he said pompously ... Having drunk, he again looked around at everyone and sat down. It seems to me that everyone felt some unpleasant feeling after this toast... There was a long pause, then the elder Kuibyshev turned to S. S. Kamenev with a question about some special military school. The majority somehow too willingly supported the conversation on this topic... Stalin himself listened attentively to the conversation and turned his head first in the direction of one speaker, then the other ... Suddenly a conversation turned about the Germans ... Someone started it

from political workers in connection with the speech or arrival in Moscow of some prominent German communist. Stalin immediately intervened in the conversation. He talked about how the Germans are the most reliable allies. They managed to throw off Wilhelm. The communist movement in Germany is expanding. The strengthening of friendly relations between the RSFSR and Germany opens up great prospects for the future and will destroy all the plans of the Entente directed against the Soviet power ... He had not yet finished when Tukhachevsky interrupted him, rather impolitely. Mikhail Nikolayevich began to speak calmly, but there was something in his tone that made Stalin suddenly blush deeply...

Starting with the fact that you need to know the country you are talking about well, Tukhachevsky attacked the Germans with all the force of his eloquence. He gave examples from history, told how the Germans treated the prisoners. "Do not forget," he concluded, "that the Germans feel victorious towards us, although in fact victory would be on the Russian side. Germany does not have enough land, and, having accumulated strength, she will someday again try to take away from us the most fertile lands. Therefore, I think and will continue to think that the fact that we now allow them too freely to ourselves is a huge mistake. Among those who are now studying with us, the most dangerous enemies for us will come out "".

Lydia Nord rightly saw here a hint of secret Soviet-German military cooperation that began after the signing of the treaty in Rapallo in 1922. We will return to this topic later and see that Tukhachevsky really played a prominent role in this cooperation and at the same time was considered by the German officers and generals who met with him to be a convinced enemy of Germany. For now

I note that at this point in her memoirs, Lydia Nord shows good awareness of the details of military relations between the USSR and Germany, naming the tank school for German officers in Kazan and the aviation school in Lipetsk that actually existed. There is nothing surprising in this awareness. After all, B. M. Feldman himself played an important role in this area and repeatedly traveled to Germany, in particular in 1927, when he attended training sessions and maneuvers of the Reichswehr. And the first trips of the Red commanders to Germany took place in 1921. And among them was the creator of the theory of a deep offensive operation, a friend of Tukhachevsky V. K. Triandafilov. True, it is still unknown whether they then went to study with the German military or, conversely, to teach the Germans how to make a revolution in Germany.

Let us return to the interrupted conversation between Tukhachevsky and Stalin.

"I don't understand why this is dangerous for us," Stalin objected to Tukhachevsky's last words, "after all, our commanders also go to Germany."

Tukhachevsky waved his hand.

"You are a civilian and therefore it is difficult for you to understand."

Stalin's cheeks started to bulge. There was some awkwardness.

"I think that Mikhail Nikolayevich is right in many respects," said the elder Kuibyshev, "you can't put your finger in the mouth of the Germans."

The Red Army, which, in which case, will repulse all enemies."

So we managed to hush up a very unpleasant conversation. He proves that in the 1920s Stalin was not yet perceived either in the army or in the party as a "living god." They argued with him, objected to him, sometimes painfully hurting Stalin's pride. That Tukhachevsky really at that time feared too close friendship with Germany is confirmed not only by the memoirs of Lydia Nord, but also by his own unpublished work, The Future War. It refers to 1928, when the "spirit of Rapallo" seemed to dominate Soviet-German relations. Tukhachevsky warned:

"Germany will be an important (if not the most important) link in the chain of the alleged anti-Soviet bloc ... Without its participation, imperialist intervention in the USSR is unthinkable. Therefore, it will be correct to signal an immediate threat of war precisely at the moment when Germany joins the anti-Soviet bloc."

Then, at Kuibyshev's, Stalin pretended that nothing had happened, but in his heart he probably held a grudge against Tukhachevsky. The remark about "civilian" should have been especially hurtful. After all, Iosif Vissarionovich considered himself one of the fathers of the Red Army, eventually appropriated all the merits of Trotsky in military development. And he always paid special attention to the armed forces. And here about his ability to understand military affairs, they responded very dismissively. It is unlikely that he could forget and forgive such a thing. But in 1932 he suddenly pretended to have forgotten and forgiven. Why?

And in general - why did Stalin initially reject Tukhachevsky's proposals, although they were entirely in line with his, General Secretary, plans to create a powerful Red Army to export the "proletarian revolution" to Western Europe and East Asia? Otherwise, why would Joseph Vissarionovich at an accelerated pace on the bones of the peasantry create a tractor-building (it is also a tank-building) and

the aviation industry, thanks to which, by the beginning of World War II, the Red Army had more tanks and combat aircraft than all other armies in the world combined? Didn't Stalin realize that Tukhachevsky was his colleague? I suspect that I understood everything perfectly. Stalin just wanted to play the "good tsar" and the "dashing boyars" - Voroshilov and Shaposhnikov. Moreover, the necessary capacities of the military industry had not yet been created, and the implementation of Tukhachevsky's proposals could be delayed for a year.

As head of armaments and deputy people's commissar, Tukhachevsky began practical activities to reorganize and re-equip the Red Army. The basic principles of the reform program were outlined by him in the manuscript "New Questions of War", begun back in Leningrad in the spring of 1931. A sketch of how Tukhachevsky created the first chapters of this work was made in her memoirs by Lydia Nord. I note that the behavior of Mikhail Nikolayevich in the image of his sister-in-law is almost like the behavior of Lenin from a well-known anecdote: "I'll tell my wife that I went to my mistress, my mistress - that my wife won't let me go, and he himself to the library - and write, write, write ... ". Here is what the memoirist told us:

"I remember that there was some kind of holiday that day and my husband was free. I persuaded him to go visit our friends. But at about eleven o'clock in the afternoon the phone rang, and

twenty minutes he will be given a car and he urgently leaves for a one-day business trip. Less than ten minutes had passed since his departure, when the bell rang, and I heard the voice of Mikhail Nikolayevich in the hallway. When he entered the dining room, holding a tightly stuffed briefcase in his hands, I guessed from his face that he intended to arrange some kind of "dirty" for me, and I prepared for the "battle". To my message that my husband went on a business trip and I was also going to visit, he did not answer me, as if this did not apply to him, and, going to the kitchen door, he called the servants.

"If someone comes or calls on the phone, then you, Xenia, say that no one is at home," he ordered. "No, I'm not crazy at all," and turning back to Xenia, he added: "Help I, please, remove everything from the table. The tablecloth too. And this table must also be cleared. Listen," he turned to me, "enough hissing. You promised me that you would prove your friendship. That's why I came today to prove it. And for Nikolai (this is the fictitious name Lydia Nord calls her husband. - B.S.) I arranged a business trip. There is nothing bad for him in this - he will travel and see more interesting and useful things than where you dragged him ... "

Saying this, Tukhachevsky was already laying out on the table the books, manuscripts and maps pulled out of the briefcase. One of them, the largest, he attached with buttons to the wall. I sat puzzled, not understanding what he wanted. "And one more thing," he continued, "you must give me your word that you will not tell anyone about this. And Nikolai too ... Well, you can tell him sometime ... in six months ... Ksyusha, you must also be silent ... And now ... prepare some tea, please. And stronger ... And you sit right here, - he pointed to the sofa, - and just follow and compare with this and this, whether I have it right here. I've worked so hard that I can't figure it out myself..."

On this day, I cursed military history. But the "fight on the Marne" and

"Ludendorff" ("New Questions of War" analyzes, first of all, the experience of the First World War. - B.S.) have remained in my memory to this day. And then I saw Mikhail Nikolayevich as he probably was in his headquarters. He did not let me add a single superfluous word, demanding precision and conciseness... An hour passed... One and a half... Two... And my torment still lasted... When I timidly hinted that I was tired, he missed it's over the ear. In the end, I completely lost my mind ... "

Yes, only a very charming man who has a magical effect on women can make a friend's wife, instead of going to visit, sit all day long over other people's papers ... And not only charming, but also firmly convinced that everyone in the world should help him in his great and important work. Such conviction is usually given to people who are very talented, brilliant, or simply extremely self-confident.

Already after she finished editing the manuscript, Lydia Nord came to her senses and took revenge on Mikhail Nikolaevich in a rather peculiar way. She mocked Tukhachevsky's surprisingly even and small, like a lady's handwriting, and to his venomous answer that not everyone was given the ability to scratch like a chicken with a paw, she noted that "all brilliant people had disgusting handwriting, and even and small handwriting is a sign of selfishness and inability to scale." Tukhachevsky could not bear such an insult and left, slamming the door (he, albeit jokingly, was suspected of earthiness and lack of genius - and yet he lived

faith in your high destiny!). But soon, of course, Mikhail Nikolaevich and Lydia Nord reconciled.

In the preface to New Questions of War, Tukhachevsky wrote:

"The present book is the first part of the intended work and deals with the armed forces and their use."

In the second and third parts, which were never written, Tukhachevsky intended to analyze the military potential of the USSR and possible "imperialist coalitions" and the likely course of the struggle against these coalitions. He confessed:

"The short time that a practically busy person has left to work on theoretical questions, with a big stretch, allows him to dwell on individual places for a long time. Life moves forward, and the beginning of the book lags behind the end ... It is quite possible, many will think that I am in this "I'm getting ahead of myself in this book. But, nevertheless, it will be a kind of optical illusion. A person does not easily get rid of the usual ideas, but theoretical work, based on technical development and socialist construction, stubbornly puts forward new forms, and I have absolutely no doubt that that in two years this book will largely become outdated, and what now seems strange will be familiar, ordinary.

What did Tukhachevsky manage to foresee? How accurate was his prediction? First of all, he attributed a decisive role in a future war to tanks and aviation. In such a general form, perhaps, the vast majority of military theoreticians who worked in the 1930s would have stood in solidarity with him. However, what is very important, Tukhachevsky was able to correctly predict many specific features of the use of these new formidable types of weapons. For example, in "New questions of war" quite rightly emphasized the need to strive for "simplicity in the production of aircraft" - a trend that manifested itself especially strongly in the second

world war and, perhaps most clearly, in the USSR, where unskilled workers from women and adolescents had to be very widely involved in the aviation industry. Tukhachevsky, following the well-known British military theorist B. Liddell Hart, argued that "the bulk of tanks will be built on the country's automobile and tractor base", and therefore "in a future war, active tanks will not be measured in thousands, as it was in 1918, but tens of thousands." I note that by June 22, 1941, the Red Army had more than 23 thousand tanks.

In February 1934, Tukhachevsky, together with the commander of the Belarusian Military District, Uborevich, wrote a letter to Voroshilov, where they argued that the air force would play a decisive role in a future war:

"Modern aviation can disrupt rail transport for a long time, destroy ammunition depots, disrupt the mobilization and concentration of troops ... The side that will not be ready to defeat the enemy's air bases, to disorganize its rail transport by systematic air attacks, to disrupt its mobilization and concentration by numerous airborne assault forces, to the destruction of its fuel depots and

ammunition, to the defeat of enemy garrisons and echelons by rapid actions of mechanized units supported by cavalry and infantry in vehicles - she herself runs the risk of being defeated.

Based on this, the authors of the letter proposed, taking into account the capabilities of the Soviet aircraft industry, to have in the Red Army by 1935 up to 15,000 combat aircraft. But soon this figure, which seemed fantastic then, was blocked. Only in the period from January 1, 1939 to June 22, 1941, the Red Army received 17,745 combat aircraft, of which 3,719 were new types, not inferior in terms of basic parameters to the best Luftwaffe aircraft. They just didn't know how to fly these planes. On the eve of the Great Patriotic War, in the first three months of 1941, the pilots of the Baltic Military District managed to fly an average of 15.5 hours, the Western one - 9, and the Kiev one - in general 4 hours. On aircraft of new designs, many pilots did not have time to take to the air. It is not surprising that, having only 1860 combat aircraft on the Eastern Front by the beginning of the war, the Germans in less than a month without much difficulty destroyed almost all the aviation of the Soviet border districts. Tukhachevsky's plans for the quantitative growth of aviation and the improvement of the quality of combat aircraft were put into practice with a large excess, but it turned out to be of little use, because the entire effect of tens of thousands of "steel birds" (more precisely, aluminum and wooden ones) was nullified by the lack of trained crews. Most likely, it was the case in excess when the number of aircraft fleet increased without taking into account the presence of pilots. Tukhachevsky, of course, was not to blame here, he was just drawing attention to the need to have trained cadres of pilots, tankers, and representatives of other military specialties. Mikhail Nikolaevich even drew attention to the fact that

"The quality level of cadres in capitalist countries with a long cultural history will be higher than our level, and a simplified comparison with numbers alone is not quite enough."

However, this warning was forgotten, and Tukhachevsky himself did not

was inclined to put this circumstance at the forefront when developing plans for a future war, since he believed that the Red Army would have to attack, not defend. One of the main tasks Tukhachevsky considered

"the creation of a deep battle, i.e., the simultaneous defeat of the enemy's battle formation, throughout its entire depth"

and in this regard, he demanded from the tanks, on the one hand, pushing through or escorting the infantry, and on the other hand, timely penetration into the rear of the enemy, both to disorganize the latter and in order to cut off his main forces from his available reserves. This deep tank breakthrough should create a barrier in the rear of the enemy, to which his main forces should be pinned down and destroyed. At the same time, this breakthrough should destroy enemy artillery, disrupt communications and capture his headquarters. That is how tank armies and corps acted in 1939-1945. Only the Wehrmacht tankers acted most successfully in this way, while the Soviet mechanized corps with poorly trained fighters and commanders and with a very small number of radio stations turned out to be bulky, poorly controlled monsters and were almost completely destroyed in the very first weeks of the Great Patriotic War. Tukhachevsky correctly emphasized:

"It is very difficult to manage a deep battle and a deep battle or operation, and the question is not only the complexity of communication: radio, aviation and a car could provide a way out of difficulties. parachute or landing method of parts with armored vehicles. - B.S.), tank breakthroughs, air bombardments, long-range and close-range artillery, infantry, etc. Only extensive practical training can improve the control apparatus and prepare it for new tasks. And he noted that "management must find ... the necessary proportion of the planned tasks with the available forces and means."

After the execution of the marshal, all this was forgotten, they were only chasing the number of tanks and aircraft, forgetting about the need to provide tank troops and aviation with well-trained cadres of fighters and commanders and sufficient means of control. This is one of the reasons for the catastrophe of the 41st year.

In fairness, I note that Tukhachevsky was mistaken in many ways about tanks. So, he thought that machine-gun tanks, devoid of cannon armament, would be no less important than artillery tanks proper, and would avoid unnecessary expenditure of artillery shells. The practice of the Second World War, when almost all tanks were artillery, did not confirm this. Also erroneous was the conclusion of Tukhachevsky (9) about the advantages of a wheeled-tracked tank over a purely tracked one. He based this conclusion on the fact that the former, unlike the latter, are capable of "moving quickly over long distances" and do not require transportation to the battlefield by rail or on special tractor trucks. However, the experience of the Second World War left the palm for caterpillar tanks, capable of moving more freely on the battlefield (which is by no means always a highway) and advancing to the battlefield along country roads and impassable roads. At the same time, the movement of tanks on their own outside the battlefield was minimized, as this quickly depleted the resource

engine and tank required a major overhaul. But Tukhachevsky turned out to be right in predicting the development of radio-controlled tanks and other means of combat used to undermine enemy fortifications and barbed wire. Such was, in particular, the German Goliath mini-tank, which appeared in 1940.

Tukhachevsky was the first in the Red Army who began to advocate large-scale airborne assaults of operational and even strategic importance. In New Questions of War, he wrote:

"Landing troops are landed both with the help of parachutes and by landing on the most suitable sites. Landing motorized assault forces (for this, Tukhachevsky demanded that the dimensions of the tanks fit the dimensions of the fuselages of heavy bombers, which were supposed to be used as vehicles. - B. S.) and continuing to maintain combat communications with them, heavy-duty aviation creates a new type of air-motorized formations (such formations actually appeared during the Second World War. - B.S.) ... If ... the country prepares for the large-scale production of airborne assault forces capable of capturing and stopping operations enemy railways in decisive directions, paralyze the deployment and mobilization of his troops, etc., then such a country will be able to

reverse the old methods of operational action and give the outcome of the war a much more decisive character.

And rightly so he concluded:

"The strongest country in a future war will be the country that will have the most powerful civil aviation and aviation industry (which will, accordingly, make it possible to create the strongest combat aviation. - B.S.)".

The last conclusion, in the light of the Second World War and later armed conflicts, is, of course, beyond doubt. But with airborne assaults, the situation is more complicated. Mikhail Nikolaevich did everything possible to bring his idea to life. So, in September 1934, in his notes on the maneuvers of the Leningrad Military District, he stated with satisfaction:

"The use of airborne landings was especially thought out. The size of the landings (several hundred people. - B.S.) is the largest in the Red Army."

But looking ahead

"We must accustom ourselves to thousands of landings."

And soon the dreams came true. At the maneuvers of the Kyiv and Belorussian military districts in 1936, thousands of paratroopers appeared in the sky. However, in the same Tukhachevsky also noted the shortcomings of mass landings, in particular, that "paratroopers jump without weapons" and that "airborne landings should be provided with fighters." The main thing was not in this. Paratroopers soon learned to parachute with weapons. And the idea that landing transport aircraft should be covered by fighters also did not raise any objections from anyone. The trouble, as it turned out already during the Second World War, was something else. For the success of landing operations, it was not enough to have tens and hundreds of thousands of paratroopers (in the USSR, their mass training was provided by Osoaviakhim, headed by R.P. Eideman close to Tukhachevsky). More developed transport aviation was required. And in the USSR, almost exclusively fighters and light and medium bombers were built. Transport vehicles and capable of performing them

the functions of heavy bombers until the beginning of World War II were very few. In addition, it required almost absolute air supremacy in the landing area, preliminary very thorough suppression of enemy forces and means by artillery and aviation here, and the highest skill of pilots and paratroopers themselves, so that the landing force was landed as closely as possible and in the first minutes on the ground the paratroopers could organize themselves in units and immediately join the battle. In these first minutes and even hours, paratroopers were the most vulnerable and suffered heavy losses. Failure to comply with at least one of the listed conditions almost always doomed the parachute landing to failure. For the landing, however, a preliminary capture of the airfield or at least a site suitable for aircraft was required, which the same first parachute landing should have done. Favorable conditions for landing were created very rarely, not only in the Red Army, but also in the armies of other countries. As a result, there was only one significant successful airborne operation in World War II, the German landing on Crete in May 1941. But big losses during its

forced the Germans to refuse to conduct new airborne assaults of this magnitude. In practice, landings rarely landed outside the range of their own artillery. Only at the final stage of the Soviet-Japanese war in the second half of August 1945, when, after the surrender of the Japanese army, there was almost no resistance, the Soviet airborne assault forces were able to capture a number of important cities in Northeast China and North Korea and hold them until the approach of the main forces. Basically, the Soviet airborne corps, formed on the eve of the Great Patriotic War, were used as ordinary infantry.

Of course, Tukhachevsky expected that in the first border battles the Red Army would defeat the enemy and create a suitable environment for the actions of the paratroopers. Still, he overestimated the ability of the airborne troops to exert a decisive influence on the outcome of offensive operations.

In New Questions of War, Tukhachevsky optimistically proclaimed:

"If the French Revolution created the prerequisites for the emergence of mass armies of hundreds of thousands of fighters, then the socialist reconstruction of our country, the revolution carried out in technology and production, creates the prerequisites for such a massive technical reconstruction of the army as the world has not yet seen."

At the same time, in contrast to Fuller and Liddell Hart, he believed that in the new conditions, a multimillion-strong army should not at all be replaced by a small, well-trained cadre army:

"Landings, deep breakthroughs, conducting deep battles - not only do not exclude the need for a multimillion-strong infantry and artillery army, but, on the contrary, offer it as desirable. This army will be more and more motorized and mechanized and thereby move into an ever higher and higher class of combat capability. The ratio between old and new forms of organization will depend on how long the war breaks out, but this process of development will go even faster during the war itself.

In this process, Tukhachevsky attached paramount importance to the "quality of a fighter", arguing that "a modern fighter should be highly

cultured, must have the ability to expediently and productively use advanced technology. "Mikhail Nikolaevich seemed to abstract from the specific conditions of Soviet reality in the 30s, when the bulk had long been accustomed to live and work according to a template, sat on cards (until the end of 1934) and was afraid to say an extra word, frightened by several waves of terror (Tukhachevsky did not know that the main wave was still ahead and would not pass him by).

He claimed:

"It is impossible to endure a war on one frame in peacetime. Meanwhile, having based your entire educational system on long periods of training, and in our country they are especially exaggerated, it is impossible to be ready to expediently reorganize your entire methodology for short-term, but high-quality military training. It is necessary to find such terms and such trainings that would most expediently bring together

if only the conditions for peaceful and military training of commanders... The technical equipment of the Red Army will likewise be based on the broad technical cadres of the country. The motorization of the army, for example, can be based on an extensive network of motor and tractor transport organized in Tsudotrans, MTS and state farms. According to the five-year plan, we can count on significant cadres of automotive and tractor specialists.

At the same time, Tukhachevsky did not take into account what kind of personnel the army would receive in the event of a war. After all, the same peasants and recent workers from the peasantry, who constituted the majority in the armed forces, were thoroughly demoralized by rapid and forcible collectivization, and were intimidated by terror. The liquidation of illiteracy in the USSR gave the overwhelming majority only a formal education, but by no means the ability to adequately use the acquired knowledge. Under these conditions, a smaller, but well-trained for a number of years, cadre army could be more useful to the Soviet Union than the many millions of yesterday's armed workers and peasants. But neither the military nor the political leaders of the country

realized.

Most importantly, the mass of the Soviet population was internally not free, not free to a much greater extent than even in Nazi Germany. After all, the Hitler regime existed before the start of World War II for only six years, while the Soviet regime existed for more than twenty. Under Hitler, private enterprise was preserved, in which the Nazis intervened only very limitedly, and in fact there was no total ideological control of the private life of citizens. Such an authoritative witness as Wilfried Strik-Strikfeldt, a Baltic German, a former communications officer at the headquarters of the Russian Liberation Army and a friend of the traitor general A. A. Vlasov, noted in his memoirs *Against Stalin and Hitler*:

"And the Nazi regime aspired to totalitarian, all-encompassing power, but it had not yet reached the diabolical perfection of Stalinism. In the Third Reich, some foundations of the old state and social structure were still preserved; private initiative and private property were not yet completely strangled; it was still possible to work and live independently of the state. The Germans could still express their opinion, if it did not agree with the official dogma,

could even, to a certain extent, act as they thought best. Although party pressure increased more and more tangibly (it is already unbearable for us), but this form of lack of freedom in Germany was evaluated by the overwhelming majority of former Soviet citizens by the standards of the Stalinist regime of violence and therefore was perceived as freedom. And there was a big difference between us.

A similar difference in conditions in the two countries also determined the different quality of the human material that was at the disposal of the Red Army and the Wehrmacht, and this, in turn, to a large extent influenced the ratio of losses of the two armies (not in favor of the first) during the Second World War.

Tukhachevsky, it seems, preferred not to notice anything of this kind and quite sincerely repeated ideological clichés, as if written off from the editorials of Pravda:

"In relation to the broad masses of the Red Army, we have completely incomparable advantages over all capitalist countries. Our army will have masses that consciously defend the proletarian state ... The rapid growth of socialism in our country is accompanied by the political and cultural growth of the working people and the entry of the best part of the workers, peasants and employees into the ranks of the party, Komsomol, trade unions and public organizations".

Even the generally unpleasant circumstance that, due to constant malnutrition "in civilian life," the Red Army men were inferior in height and weight to the soldiers of the armies of the main capitalist countries, Tukhachevsky sought to turn to the good of the cause. He, as a funny fact, reported:

"It is interesting to note that when we captured English aircraft during the Civil War ... their cockpits and control arrangements turned out to be completely unsuitable for our worker-peasant pilots. They lacked height, arm and leg length."

And then he continued with enthusiasm, trumping with specific calculations:

"By completing the air fleet and setting height requirements of at least 1530 mm for aviation and 1600-1700 mm for armored units, we discard 3 percent of the workers and 4 percent of the peasants when recruiting the Air Force; as for the armored forces, there we discard 13 percent of the workers and 14 percent of peasants with growth below 1600 mm.

For greater coverage of workers and peasants in the recruitment of aviation and armored forces, it is necessary to go to a significant reduction in the border of small growth.

Here it is, the principle of "class staffing" at its best! In order to have fewer people of non-proletarian origin, from the intelligentsia and employees, who are not very reliable, from a class point of view, in such important branches of the military as tanks and aviation, it is necessary to reduce the requirements for the physical data of conscripts. And Mikhail Nikolaevich gives this some rational justification:

"The staffing of aviation with people of smaller stature can provide significant advantages in many respects, since the flight qualities of undersized people are no worse than those of tall ones, but in all other respects (cabin dimensions, weight) undersized people have undoubted advantages. For example, you can achieve some increase in the range of the aircraft with a decrease in weight

pilot, replacing the difference in weight with fuel. Considering the fuel consumption for engines of 500 liters. With. in 0.215 kg per force-hour with a decrease in the weight of the pilot by 10 kg, with an aircraft crew of 2 people. we will obtain an increase in the time spent in flight due to additional fuel by 11 minutes, which at a speed of 200 km per hour will give an increase of 44.5 km. Replacing the reduced weight of the pilots with ammunition can give an additional (20 kg) - 600 pcs. Z-line cartridges in a tape or 200 pcs. 5-line cartridges in links.

Finally, the composition of airborne assault forces can be quantitatively increased if the height, and hence the weight, of the infantry fighters trained for this purpose is reduced.

When recruiting armored troops, the smaller height of the fighters will also provide significant advantages. Since the weight of a fighter in the armored forces does not play a significant role, here the matter will come down to a more convenient action of the fighters with existing dimensions, to a more convenient placement of firearms and weapons, and to the possibility of taking into account the smaller dimensions of places to accommodate a team when designing tanks and armored vehicles.

It seems that people, Red Army soldiers, for Tukhachevsky are just consumables for the war, like fuel or ammunition. I'm afraid that if then genetic engineering had made those impressive successes that the whole world is talking about today, Mikhail Nikolayevich would have seriously thought about the possibility of breeding an optimal fighter pilot or tank fighter. As for Tukhachevsky's considerations regarding the ratio of the weight and height of the fighters and the type of troops, where, accordingly, undersized soldiers were to be used, life proved their absolute validity only in relation to tank troops. Everything there is really determined by the dimensions of the tank, and the smaller the height and weight of the tanker, the more convenient it is for him to perform his duties. In hand-to-hand fights, tank crews almost never have to be, except perhaps in the completely fantastic film "Liberation" by Yuri Ozerov about the Battle of Prokhorov. But about the paratroopers and pilots, Tukhachevsky was mistaken. In all the armies of the world, including the Red, landing troops were considered as elite formations. And the strongest and most enduring fighters were selected there, not necessarily short and thin. After all, they had to act in difficult landing conditions, sometimes relying only on their own strength. Here, none of the chiefs thought of saving on the weight of paratroopers. Likewise, the profession of a pilot requires an increased expenditure of physical energy, and it is pointless to gain on the pilot's weight - the saved kilograms can turn into an unplanned accident. Tukhachevsky sometimes sank in his book to bare-faced denunciations against those who had already been arrested by that time (former tsarist officers and generals like Svechin, which, of course, does not do him credit. For example, in the following passage:

"War requires the maximum number of military formations. There are certainly no "extra battalions" here. However, the wreckers tried to make a hole in this issue to undermine our defense capability. Some criminally underestimated the production capabilities of our military and mobilized industry, while others sought to establish a "direct proportion" between submitted

shell industry and the number of rifle formations. If, they said, the army demands "X" shells, expecting to have "Y" divisions, then if only 50 percent of the shells are supplied, the number of divisions should also be reduced by 50 percent. The incorrectness of this point of view lies in the fact that it does not even take into account the difference between the means of suppression and the means of defense.

Nevertheless, there was a rational grain in the arguments of Tukhachevsky's opponents, whose unenviable fate he himself eventually shared. Svechin and others were right when they pointed out that the organizational structure of the army should correspond to the amount of weapons and ammunition available. So, before the Great Patriotic War, to break through the fortified defenses of the enemy, it was considered

a sufficient density of 57 guns and mortars per kilometer of front in the breakthrough sector. In fact, at the final stage of the war, Soviet troops created a density of 300-400 barrels per kilometer of front to break through the German defenses. Meanwhile, for comparison: in July 1943, German troops were able to break through the defenses on the southern face of the Kursk Bulge, creating a density of only 43 guns and mortars per 1 km in the breakthrough area. The whole point was the ability to properly reconnoiter the targets that the artillery was supposed to hit, and the timely and complete provision of firing guns with ammunition. But, since since the time of Tukhachevsky, the Red Army was seized by a passion for gigantomania, they preferred to have as many guns as possible, for which there was not enough ammunition, and to fire at the squares, instead of scouting targets properly.

At the same time, in many respects Tukhachevsky was right. By the nature of his activities as chief of armaments, he was engaged not only in the ground forces and aviation, but also in the navy. And here, in maritime affairs, he very accurately predicted the main trend of development, although he had never been a sailor.

As early as May 8, 1928, a meeting of the Revolutionary Military Council was held with the participation of the chiefs of the naval forces of the Baltic and Black Seas. Discussed the development of the fleet. Tukhachevsky believed that "the republic spends an unreasonable amount of money on the naval armed forces" and argued: "The restoration of the Navy and the development of the existing large naval program is not in the development of the war plan, but in the development, I would say, of the naval patriotism of our marine workers .. "We are in a position directly opposite to that of Japan and England. The naval operations of even the most powerful world imperialists cannot violate either our economic or political integrity... The Navy plays a purely auxiliary role in the performance of our operations. The Land Army and the Air Fleet are the main pillars on which our defense of the country is actually based ... As in any business, so in the strategic driving of the army there is always a desire to shut up all directions and be stronger in all directions, but you have to risk some sectors in order to achieve the necessary goals in the main direction .. Here we need to get the final statement: do we need a battle fleet, which we will start, knowing that this fleet is to fight the "limitrophes" (literally: "border states"; so called the countries formed after the collapse of the Russian Empire: Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Finland, as well as Romania, which took over Bessarabia, - which constituted

"cordon sanitaire" against the Bolsheviks. - B.S.) is too strong, and too weak to fight the imperialist countries, or approach the issue most soberly and practically and concentrate the main forces on decisive types of equipment. "Mikhail Nikolayevich suggested paying more attention not to expensive battleships, but to cheaper and no less effective naval aviation and coastal artillery, including anti-aircraft. He reasonably pointed out:

"Which is stronger: our 3 dreadnoughts or 3 bombers in connection with the coastal artillery that we can have ... Undoubtedly, this defense complex is much stronger, it will be able to provide our defense much more and at the same time these expenses for aviation, for mobile artillery cannot be a major loss.

At that time, the Revolutionary Military Council generally agreed with the position of Tukhachevsky and

in the first place in the tasks of the fleet he put assistance to the ground forces in coastal areas and the defense of the coast, and only then actions on enemy sea lanes and independent actions at sea. At the same time, it was ordered not to get carried away with battleships and cruisers, but to have a balanced composition of the fleet - with light surface forces, submarines, naval aviation and coastal defense.

In 1932, Tukhachevsky conducted an experimental exercise of the Baltic Fleet, as a result of which he made a very decisive conclusion that powerful battleships, which had previously been considered the main striking force of the fleet, had outlived their time.

"The use of new technical means of sea and air naval combat," Mikhail Nikolayevich wrote in a report to the People's Commissar, "raises the question of combating the battle fleet in a completely new way, especially in conditions of relative proximity to the coast. The speed of a battleship and the power of its artillery weapons may decrease, and sometimes they are almost nullified by the use of high-altitude and low-altitude torpedoes, high-altitude laying of minefields, attacks by radio-controlled missiles and torpedo boats, by smoke in artillery observation and control on ships, by dropping small smoke bombs and powerful air bombing, using in all cases a wide setting of smoke screens aviation".

Indeed, in the Second World War, the role of battleships very quickly came to naught, since they were very vulnerable to aviation and submarines. So, during the defeat at Pearl Harbor in December of the 41st, all American battleships were destroyed or disabled. However, the Americans managed to keep their aircraft carriers intact, and thanks to this, six months later, the Japanese fleet was defeated by them in a battle near Midway Atoll.

Unfortunately, in the Soviet Union in the 30s they again began to get involved in the construction of battleships and heavy cruisers. The fact that Stalin himself favored these ships also played a role. As a result, by the beginning of the Second World War, the Red Fleet turned out to be redundant to fight the fleets of the "limitrophes" and even with those very limited forces that the German fleet could allocate against it. Nevertheless, in both the Baltic and the Black Sea, Soviet naval forces suffered heavy losses from German aircraft and submarines.

After the end of the war, the USSR launched a full-scale race

naval weapons, first - battleships, then - nuclear submarines, missile cruisers and aircraft carriers, but did not catch up with the fleet of the main potential enemy - the United States.

And today in Russia the fleet is too large for possible local conflicts with neighbors, but is obviously doomed in a full-scale conflict with the same NATO. And again, calls for the strengthening of the Russian fleet are nothing more than, in the words of Tukhachevsky,

"maritime patriotism of maritime workers",

incommensurable with the real possibilities of the country.

I will point out that sometimes Tukhachevsky was mistaken in his forecasts regarding certain types of weapons. For example, he advocated the speedy replacement of conventional recoilless artillery. But he was way ahead of his time. The era of recoilless artillery came after the Second World War. But Tukhachevsky very early saw the prospect of developing missile weapons. Back in November 1932, he achieved the start of work on the design of liquid-fuel rocket engines, and in September 1933 he achieved the creation of the Jet Research Institute, which was engaged in the development of rocket weapons in the USSR. Tukhachevsky also appreciated the importance of radars. In early 1933, he instructed the Air Defense Directorate to determine which institutes and design bureaus could take up the use of electromagnetic waves to detect aircraft. And on October 7, 1934, he wrote to his old acquaintance, the leader of the Leningrad communists, S. M. Kirov:

"The experiments carried out on the detection of aircraft using an electromagnetic beam confirmed the correctness of the underlying principle. The results of the research work carried out in this part make it possible to begin the construction of an experimental air defense reconnaissance station serving the detection of aircraft in conditions of poor visibility, at night, as well as at large altitudes (up to 10 thousand meters and above) and at a range of 50-200 km. In view of the extreme relevance for modern air defense of the development of this issue, I beg you not to refuse to help the engineer-inventor comrade Oshchepkov in promoting and accelerating his orders in every possible way at Leningrad factories ..."

As you know, both radar stations and rocket weapons were used already in the Second World War. Radars were used to detect both aircraft and submarines. Rocket mortars appeared in the troops (Soviet Katyushas and German six-barreled mortars), rockets appeared in aviation, and at the end of the war the Germans even managed to launch the production of cruise and ballistic missiles - V-1 and V-2.

Until that time, Tukhachevsky did not have a chance to live. After his arrest and execution, many military scientific developments were stopped, and a number of scientists, including the future chief designer of the first Soviet space rockets S.P. Korolev, were repressed as having frequent business contacts with the "enemy of the people" Tukhachevsky. Thus, the design and introduction into production of a number of weapons models was delayed for several years.

Outwardly, Tukhachevsky's career developed quite smoothly. On February 21, 1933, he was awarded the Order of Lenin "for exceptional personal services to the revolution in organizing the defense of the USSR on

external and internal fronts during the civil war and subsequent organizational measures to strengthen the power of the Red Army. "In the same year, they were entrusted with hosting a military parade on Red Square on November 7. In 1934, at the XUP party congress, Mikhail Nikolayevich was elected a candidate member of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (6). On November 20, 1935, Tukhachevsky, together with Voroshilov, Budyonny, Egorov and Blucher, was awarded the highest military rank of Marshal of the Soviet Union, and less than a year later, on April 9, 1936, he became the first deputy people's commissar of defense and head of the Combat Training Directorate of the Red Army. the rapid ascent of the youngest "red

marshal" to the heights of military power, up to the second most important post in the hierarchy of the People's Commissariat of Defense, the struggle of groups was hidden. Voroshilov and the commanders of the First Cavalry who supported him opposed Tukhachevsky, around whom communists from among former officers were grouped, as well as some military leaders, officer ranks in who did not have the tsarist army, but were in tense relations with Voroshilov and other "cavalrymen".

Kliment Efremovich himself was very suspicious of the innovations of his young deputy. In particular, the people's commissar at the plenum of the Revolutionary Military Council criticized the theory of deep combat advocated by Tukhachevsky. In this regard, on November 20, 1933, he turned to Voroshilov with a letter, where he noted:

"After your speech at the Plenum of the Revolutionary Military Council, many had the impression that, despite the new weapons in the army, tactics should remain old ... I decided to write this letter because after the Plenum, fermentation began in the minds of commanders. There is talk of abandoning new forms of tactics, from their development, and since ... this is completely at odds with what you have repeatedly expressed, I decided to inform you of the ongoing confusion ... "

There really was confusion, but not only among middle-level commanders, but also among senior military leaders. Sooner or later, an open clash in the leadership of the People's Commissariat of Defense became inevitable.

Lydia Nord cites Tukhachevsky's words addressed to her, explaining the motives for his actions to transform the Red Army:

"I'm very worried about the fate of my work. But this is not ambition. I'll tell you frankly - I made every effort to do it well ... I go stubbornly towards my goal. Believe me, that none of the military leadership, except Frunze, lived and does not live by the army as I live by it. No one has such a clear idea of its future structure, number and the level at which the army should become. Frunze, unfortunately, is no longer alive. Sergei Sergeevich Kamenev is an excellent military specialist, but only an official. Voroshilov is a good man, but an oak, and he does not have deep military knowledge, he does not have the independence and determination that Mikhail Vasilyevich had. Therefore ... I need to strive to become the head of the leadership of the army. Otherwise, its development will go wrong, and by the right moment she will not be ready.

Mikhail Nikolayevich considered himself the most suitable person for the post of People's Commissar of Defense, and by "the right moment" he meant the time of an inevitable military clash with Germany.

"It is inevitable. Maybe it will not happen so soon - in years

10-13 (the conversation took place in Leningrad in the late 1920s or early 30s. - B.S.). I know Germans. That victory over Russia, which they accidentally got, they will not forget. When Germany rests and remilitarizes, she will again try to attack us. But, - Tukhachevsky stood up and, looking arrogantly into the distance, as if he had already seen a defeated enemy there, said: - We will wean Germany from dreaming about our land! She then learns what Russia is! And the Germans will forever forget the words "Russian Schweine" (Russian pigs. - B.S.)."

The sister-in-law was shocked:

"His eyes were more out of their sockets and burned with such fire that I felt uneasy. "Is he really a maniac?" - I thought. As if guessing my thought, he sat down again and put his hand on mine: "I seemed crazy to you ? No, it will be. And if not, then I will have the strength to put a bullet in my forehead. When there is no goal, there is no life. My goal is to make our army the best and strongest in the world... I spoke about this only to Frunze. He understood me. Others may consider only a "careerist" or "ambitious", aiming at the Bonapartes. That's why I'm not particularly frank ... ""

It seems to me that there was another reason why Tukhachevsky took up the task of reorganizing the Red Army with such zeal. Mikhail Nikolaevich was friends with the writer Alexei Nikolaevich Tolstoy, the "red marshal" with the "red count" (they, as we remember, had a common ancestor). Tolstoy in emigre circles was subjected to the same ostracism as Tukhachevsky. And inside the country, part of the intelligentsia, which never accepted Soviet power, considered the writer, like the commander, an unprincipled opportunist, ready to serve the Bolsheviks for honors and material benefits. Tolstoy was well acquainted with the American journalist Eugene Lyons, a United Press correspondent in Moscow in the early 1930s. Lyons quickly realized that the regime existing in the USSR had nothing to do with either freedom or concern for the welfare of the people. By the way, back in 1953, he invented the expression "Homo sovieticus", meaning a person of a totalitarian society with his inherent double morality and a clear distinction between what should be said in accordance with the official ideology and how things really are (since then this expression spread all over the world). Once Tolstoy invited Lyons to his villa in Detskoye (Tsarskoye) Selo, where, by the way, Tukhachevsky also visited him more than once. Lyons and his wife were surprised that the walls of the mansion were decorated with paintings and tapestries from the Hermitage. The table was bursting with wines and snacks, although at that time the townspeople were sitting on cards, and the peasants were swollen from hunger. After a fair amount of drinking, the owner suddenly invited the American upstairs to the attic, where his library was located. In the room, Lyons saw a massive work desk in the center and many books on the walls. A typical Russian landscape opened from the window: a wooden church, cows in a meadow, men at work. Tolstoy showed Lyons the death mask of Peter the Great, a novel he was working on. Then he turned to the window and said quietly: "Gene, this is the real Russia, my Russia ..., the rest is a lie. When I enter this room, I shake off the Soviet nightmare, close myself from its stench and horror. For that little while I'm with my Peter, I can say to these scoundrels (Lyons quoted this word in Russian): go to hell ... One fine day, believe me, all of Russia will send them to hell ... This

everything I wanted you to know. Now back to the guests."

Lyons commented on this monologue:

"Although he never again expressed his true feelings to me, it remained a quiet secret between us. Since then, whenever I hear arguments that a traditional Russian man has died, that he was replaced by a robotic "Homo Sovieticus", I remember that case in the library This was one of the many cases that convinced me that the surface layer of Soviet conformity could

be very thin. Hundreds of times I saw how this layer was destroyed under the influence of vodka or an even more heady atmosphere of confidentiality, and soon I ceased to be surprised when people who seemed to everyone to be models of orthodox communists suddenly began to curse everything Soviet. Tolstoy's obsession with the era of Peter was, in a certain sense, an escape from the hated present. There were others who tried to hide in the past... to avoid having to lie about the present."

Who knows if the mighty Russian army that Tukhachevsky dreamed of creating was not for him the same as the work on Peter the Great was for Tolstoy? After all, the marshal could not help but see that a much more absolute dictatorship was established in the country than it was under the autocracy, that in responsible positions in the military department there are incompetent people, whose entire merit is in PERSONAL devotion to Voroshilov and Stalin, that the Soviet Union is still far from those ideals of equality and justice that the Bolsheviks spoke about. Although, of course, Tukhachevsky would not scold everything Soviet even when heavily drunk (if he ever had it).

And it is hardly worth exaggerating Mikhail Nikolayevich's sympathy for the hardships of the life of the common people. He knew little about them, since the army is a rather isolated cell of society, and the top command staff of the Red Army was also separated from the rank and file soldiers by the armor of rations and benefits and ever-increasing corporate isolation. Lydia Nord wrote about it well:

"From the very beginning, the Red Army was put in the position of a special, privileged caste. In material terms, the military lived much better than the civilian population. And not only the highest command staff ... The regiment commander at that time (1925-1930) received a hundred and then one hundred and twenty rubles a month. In artillery and armored units - 140 rubles. The difference between the regiment commander and his assistant was ten rubles. The commander of a battalion (not a separate one) received thirty rubles less than the regiment commander, and the company commander ten rubles less than battalion commander (for comparison: the average monthly salary of workers and employees in 1928 did not exceed 65 rubles, and the real incomes of the peasants were even less. - B. S.) But at the same time, each commander had free summer and winter uniforms (they received material, and sewed tailor parts) and a commander's ration from the supply room, which included sugar, butter, lard or lard, vegetable oil, meat, cereals, vegetables and bread. All this was in such quantity that small families lived almost exclusively on this ration. This ration could be obtained from the captain in parts during the whole month, and only sugar, cereals and, it seems, fats had to be received at once. The highest commanding staff also received an additional "responsible ration".

The apartment was usually also state-owned, and I don't remember anymore, it was charged

whether the payment for it, it seems, yes, but the deductions for the apartment were very small, and "apartment" money was added to the salary.

Even in those periods when the population lived from hand to mouth or starved, in the closed distributors of the military trade - and there were branches at each independent part - it was possible to receive all the scarce products and goods.

It is clear that even in the late 1920s Tukhachevsky received much more than

120 rubles a month, and in his rations he had not only pearl barley, corned beef and vegetable oil, but also caviar, and salmon, and ham, and cognac, which he loved so much. And his apartments were much more spacious than those of a regiment or battalion commander. True, in Smolensk, living conditions, as one might assume, still left much to be desired. As one of the colleagues on the Western Front, I. A. Telyatnikov, testifies, it was inconvenient for Tukhachevsky to work in the apartment, and "the usual place for his nightly activities was the salon-car." The memoirist explains as follows why the commander chose not to do this in the headquarters, where "there were much more amenities":

"...Mikhail Nikolayevich, taking care of the health of the staff commanders, gave the order that no one should stay at the headquarters for the night... And what he forbade others, he did not allow himself. Otherwise, what an example for subordinates?"

I strongly suspect that it was not concern for subordinates that prompted Tukhachevsky to settle in the saloon car for the night. It was just more convenient to have short-lived romances with local ladies there, combining business with pleasure, love joys with studying works on military theory and history. At the headquarters, sentries and duty officers still remain. But on the sidings of the railway station, incognito can be provided much more reliably.

Here in Moscow, the apartment immediately turned out to be large. But not only the wife and daughter settled here, but also the mother, brothers and sisters. Now Tukhachevsky already had the opportunity to provide his mistresses with living space and met with them on their territory. So in Moscow, in Leningrad, and again in Moscow, the "housing problem" did not in any way interfere with the amorous affairs of Mikhail Nikolayevich. Obviously, he explained his delays by late meetings in the People's Commissariat, and the unfortunate wife dutifully pretended to believe.

Lydia Nord recalled that even personal communication with the red commanders was rather strictly regulated:

"In their free time, the commanders often went to visit each other. They played preference, and in some houses they played nine. They played preference and lotto openly, and secretly played the nine, which was forbidden in the army. And most of the quartermasters played it. But in the houses of the red commanders, both senior and senior, and, it seems, the middle command staff, too, there were almost never civilians, with the exception of the closest relatives. This was not accidental. The political departments strongly recommended staff to stay away from the civilian population, "to protect military units from espionage" ... It must be said that acquaintance with houses was also carried out by rank. In the house of the highest command staff there were rarely guests below the regiment commander ... Commanders of platoons, companies and even battalions visited the house of the regiment commander only on business ... Once ... I put myself in a very unpleasant position - I met a recently released from the military

the school of the son of our old acquaintance, General S. I knew him since childhood - we were almost the same age and, delighted with the meeting, invited him to us. He came the next day, and when I treated him to tea, several guests from Moscow came with my husband. Seeing S., everyone somehow changed, kept themselves stiff. And my guest, apparently feeling embarrassed, hastened to leave. And later, my husband, although in a very mild form, reprimanded me for my

imprudence - it turned out that I have no right to invite young people to my house, since this is also "not recommended", because young commanders may accidentally learn from the conversations of higher ones about any movements or incidents in the army that are not subject to publicity.

Lydia Nord also recalls another case in which Tukhachevsky himself was already involved:

"Once, during some kind of celebration at ... the academy, after sitting at the "table of honor" during the entire dinner, I decided to get dinner at another table where a family I knew was sitting ... a childhood friend with her husband, an artilleryman - he I was a listener there. But before I had time to sit with them even ten minutes, the commissar of the academy Genin came up and politely escorted me to the seat assigned to me at the main table. At first I thought that Tukhachevsky had sent Genin for me, and submitted with gnashing of teeth, but he, looking at me very maliciously, said: "Genin vigilantly watches those who violate ethics." When I later attacked Mikhail Nikolayevich about the new "ethics" and cited the tsarist army as an example, he objected: "Yes, there is a young officer taught how to behave in society. But there were people of the same class, and there were traditions, but if young officers begin to visit such "houses" as Avksentevsky, Gorodovikov, Budyonny, and many regiment commanders who cannot exist without vodka and square swearing, then how are they "brought up"? And do not think that even before all the houses gave young officers only one good thing. So, when I had just been promoted, they tried to introduce me into a house in St. Petersburg, a very high-ranking military house, connected by some distant relationship with our family, and what I heard enough there ... about such things for which an ordinary person would be exiled to hard labor ... And we, young officers, soaked it up like sponges ... Yes, and in our homes we sometimes allow ourselves to openly express a lot and criticize many ... And young, foolishly, will blurt out to someone - and he himself will get into trouble, and cause us trouble ... And then, if many of the top commanders can afford the luxury of wasting an evening playing cards or other entertainment, then young people need to improve themselves - to read, to study. .. The army needs knowledgeable commanders ... I don't even have time to have fun ... "

I don't know if Tukhachevsky played preference or even a more criminal and reckless "nine" .. Maybe he still snatched an hour or two a week for these innocent entertainments ... But he could even talk with regiment commanders at home only on business, without allowing any familiarity and familiarity - that's for sure. True, according to the testimony of the surviving memoirists, here Mikhail Nikolayevich was much more democratic than many of his colleagues, he never humiliated juniors in rank and received them at his home quite

affably. Here, for example, are the memoirs of V. N. Ladukhin, who worked in the supply department of the Red Army. Once in the 37th, shortly before the death of the marshal, the commander had to go to the apartment of the Tukhachevskys in order to take a note from Tukhachevsky for Uborevich (Ladukhin was leaving on a business trip to Minsk). This visit will be remembered for a lifetime:

"I ... found the whole family at breakfast. Mikhail Nikolaevich introduced me to his wife, introduced me to his daughter Svetlana, invited me to the table ... After breakfast, I began to examine the paintings hanging on the wall.

"Be careful in your assessments," Tukhachevsky warned. - The artist is in front of you. And most importantly, the artist's wife is nearby. - "If the local artist and his wife come to me, they will be in the same position," I answered him in tone. Mikhail Nikolaevich directly blossomed: "I am very pleased when I find out that one of the commanders is fond of painting, or music, or literature. It seems to me that this is how our commander should be: with a wide range of interests, with love for art. True Soviet intellectual!

The marshal himself was by no means confined to military matters. He played the violin amateurly and made violins much more professionally, although he did not reach the heights of Stradivari and Guarneri in this craft. And he drew well, which Ladukhin, who also dabbled in painting, did not fail to note. He also collected rare books, including those on military art.

And, unlike those who were in low-ranking ranks, Tukhachevsky communicated with civilians quite widely, though not with the common population, but with representatives of the elite, primarily the cultural one. Sisters Elizabeth and Olga recalled:

"The apartment on Nikolskaya was always crowded. Mikhail's comrades-in-arms and his musician friends, famous commanders and teachers of the academy - everyone felt at home there. Friendly conversations and impromptu concerts dragged on well after midnight. Mikhail slept very little, and when someone ever reminded him of this, he only laughed it off: "It's a pity to waste time on sleep" ... He could not do ... without music, without painting, without systematic reading. In his rich spiritual world there was a place for Beethoven and Bach, Schumann and Mussorgsky, Mozart and Scriabin, Chopin and Mendelssohn, Tolstoy and Shakespeare... He was interested in everything new in science, technology, art... Even while working, Mikhail left the door to his office open. but he easily joined the atmosphere that reigned around: he joked, had fun or entered into a serious conversation, into a heated argument.

Tukhachevsky, according to many who knew him, was distinguished by the desire to help his neighbor. The sisters testify that the brother did not remain indifferent to the troubles of friends and acquaintances, he helped in any way he could:

"We have not seen a person more responsive and sensitive than he ... Mikhail Nikolayevich Tukhachevsky was an intellectual in the highest and best sense of the word, that is, a man of great knowledge, indestructible principles, and a comprehensive culture."

One of the greatest composers and a close friend of Marshal D. D. Shostakovich was also a frequent guest at the Tukhachevskys' evenings. Acquainted with Tukhachevsky since 1925, Dmitry Dmitrievich noted in him sensitivity and sincere anxiety about the fate of his comrades. Especially often

they saw each other in Leningrad when Tukhachevsky commanded the district there. And even earlier, when B. M. Shaposhnikov commanded the district, the composer was once summoned to him. It turns out that Tukhachevsky found out about Shostakovich's financial difficulties and, as the chief of staff of the Red Army, ordered that the district commander help Dmitry Dmitrievich. As a result, the composer received an order, and his financial situation improved. Shostakovich noted with admiration

"democratism, attentiveness, delicacy" of Tukhachevsky (it is a pity that this delicacy was not found at one time for the Tambov peasants).

And the marshal loved our smaller brothers. The attending physician of Tukhachevsky M. I. Kagalovsky told a touching story:

"It often happens that people who are kind and sympathetic by nature love animals. Mikhail Nikolayevich was like that. The mouse that took root in his office served as fun for him. Mikhail Nikolayevich taught the mouse to climb the table at a certain time and receive his daily ration. Tukhachevsky on occasion even liked to brag about his successes in training.

Interestingly, even such a natural feeling as love for animals, our hero also managed to use to satisfy his own vanity.

Shostakovich in his memoirs gives a typical case:

"One day, together with Mikhail Nikolayevich, I went to the Hermitage. We wandered through the halls and ... joined a group of sightseers. The guide was not very experienced and did not always give successful explanations. Mikhail Nikolayevich tactfully supplemented, and even corrected him. as if Tukhachevsky and the guide had switched roles. At the end, the guide came up to me and, nodding his head in the direction of Mikhail Nikolayevich, dressed in civilian clothes, asked: "Who is this?" My answer struck him so much that for some time he literally lost the power of speech "And when he came to his senses, he began to thank Tukhachevsky for the lesson. Mikhail Nikolaevich, smiling in a friendly way, advised the guide to continue his studies. "It's never too late," he added.

It is curious that neither Tukhachevsky nor Shostakovich even thought that the act of Mikhail Nikolayevich was not so worthy. None of the friends tried to put themselves in the place of a young and inexperienced tour guide, to try to mentally survive the humiliation that he had to experience during Tukhachevsky's lecture. And what was left for the poor fellow to do, how not to thank a high-ranking military leader for the science he taught? After all, the marshal, if desired, could talk with the unfortunate guide after the end of the tour, point out to him the gaps in his art history education, without exposing him to general shame. But Tukhachevsky really loved to shine, to be in sight, and, it turns out, he appreciated even those few minutes of admiration that the sightseers shocked by his erudition gave him. And he sincerely believed that he could figure it out and say his weighty word in almost all branches of science and culture, and not just in the art of war.

Shostakovich cites another amusing incident:

"I admired the poise of Mikhail Nikolaevich. He did not get annoyed, did not raise his voice, even if he did not agree with the interlocutor. Only once he lost his temper when I thoughtlessly

spoke about the composer, whom he did not like and did not understand. I remember that Tukhachevsky spoke something like this: "One cannot categorically judge what has not been thought through and studied enough." Then, developing his thought, Mikhail Nikolayevich reproached me: "You are against the philistine in

judgments, but judge yourself in a philistine way. You want to become a composer ("I must admit, I already considered myself one," the dearest Dmitry Dmitrievich timidly remarked in brackets. - B.S.), but approach the evaluation of works of art lightly, superficially. "Our conversation dragged on long after midnight. Returning home along the deserted Nevsky, I felt a sense of resentment. But, seriously thinking about the harsh words of Mikhail Nikolaevich, I realized: he was right. His harshness was explained by the greatest respect for art and artists, and besides - a kind attitude towards me, for which I will tell him all my life thankful".

Here I want to shout to the doctor - heal yourself! Tukhachevsky tries to convince his interlocutor that it is impossible to indisputably judge what you do not know deeply and thoroughly, and at the same time sharply, categorically declares that he is completely wrong in assessing the work of some unnamed composer. And this is what an amateur violinist and amateur musicologist says to a recognized master of musical composition! Moreover, he does not consider him a composer, he says that Shostakovich is only to become a composer! There is something to be surprised. Of course, Dmitry Dmitrievich, a very modest man and sincerely devoted to the memory of his friend, in his memoirs portrayed this episode in the most favorable light for Tukhachevsky. And if you look at their dispute through the eyes of an impartial observer? I'm afraid the impression would not be in favor of Mikhail Nikolaevich. After all, Shostakovich, for example, nevertheless made a reservation: "I am not a military man, and it is not for me to judge Mikhail Nikolayevich's talent as a commander." But Tukhachevsky considered it possible to speak about the presence or absence of talent in a particular composer or musician. Although, Shostakovich gives him his due, "he loved and understood music." Most importantly, the commander was not to take self-confidence, which sometimes let him down hard, in particular in the battle near Warsaw.

L. V. Guseva told how at the end of January or at the beginning of February 1936 she met at Tukhachevsky's "depressed, confused" Shostakovich, who had just been subjected in the editorial of Pravda "Muddle instead of music" to derogatory criticism for the opera "Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk district" ("Katerina Izmailova"):

"And you should have seen how sympathetically Mikhail Nikolayevich treated him. They retired together for a long time to the office. I don't know what they were talking about, but Shostakovich left the office a renewed man. He stepped decisively to the piano and began to improvise. He did not tear his admiring glance from his friend, whom he believed in and whom he managed to inspire faith in himself.

On another occasion, Tukhachevsky also acted as the savior of some not very famous composer, under tragicomic circumstances. The attending physician of Marshal M. I. Kagalovsky told about this story:

"Once a tipsy man was found in his car, trying to unscrew the nickel-plated door handles. They wanted to detain the unknown, but Mikhail Nikolaevich asked to be released, to let him sleep. Subsequently, this man sent Tukhachevsky

a letter of thanks, said that he was a composer, and invited him to listen to his opera. Mikhail Nikolayevich, reading the letter, laughed heartily and reproached the drivers: "After all, they could ruin a person's life because of a trifle."

An ordinary act, normal from the point of view of common sense, in the eyes of both the participant in the incident and the memoirist, who lived under the conditions of a totalitarian system, became almost a feat, and at least an extraordinary act. Indeed, there is no way to sew the unfortunate intent on a terrorist attack - just like that, he took it and let it go, even without a fine. You should definitely be grateful. Most likely, the composer thought so, whose fate could have been much sadder if someone else, for example Yezhov, had been in the place of Tukhachevsky.

To V. N. Ladukhin, whose father was a professor at the Moscow Conservatory and a composer, Tukhachevsky confessed:

"There is nothing more beautiful than music. This is my second passion, after military affairs."

And he told the supply commander, who dreamed (6) of the career of an opera singer, about his hobby: making violins. He told how "he suffers with the search for material for violins. Recently, he finally found some kind of Caucasian wood and specially dries logs obtained from Transcaucasia. He himself develops the composition of the varnish. Varnish is the great secret of the old violin masters." When Tukhachevsky took an almost finished violin out of the closet, Ladukhin noticed inside a sticker with the name of the creator of the violin - just like the old masters. L. V. Guseva recalls that the making of violins was almost a sacred rite for Tukhachevsky:

"In Mikhail Nikolayevich's home conversations, violin making was a favorite topic. He knew a lot of stories related to making violins, and dozens of professional secrets that he willingly shared. With the skill of a true master, Tukhachevsky himself created excellent musical instruments. Sometimes Nina Evgenievna and I were involved in this as "auxiliary labor" - we were entrusted to wipe with emery any carefully planed detail of the future violin, sometimes even polish it. These were very fun hours. Smeared with varnish and glue, we listened to the endless mocking remarks of Mikhail Nikolayevich: "Well, perhaps that's how they work! What a Stradivarius of you!.." Once, at one of these hours, Yakir appeared. Mikhail Nikolaevich turned to him with a playful complaint about us: "You see, Jonah, I'm trying to exploit them, but they don't give in, they threaten to complain to the trade union."

At the same time, Tukhachevsky clearly realized that he could not rise to the level of truly great violin makers. This is evidenced by the following episode from the memoirs of Guseva:

"Once I found an experienced violin maker E.F. Vitachek at the Tukhachevskys. Mikhail Nikolayevich talked with him for a long time and enthusiastically, showed the guest his collection of violins, jars of varnishes, pulled out a cherished piece of some special tree (probably that rare one, from Transcaucasia - B. S.). This unsightly-looking little log Tukhachevsky saved for many years more than any jewel, dreamed of making a wonderful violin out of it. And suddenly, when Vitachek left, we were surprised to find that the famous piece of wood had disappeared. "Where is she?" - Nina Evgenievna asked in confusion. "I gave it to Vitachek,

Mikhail Nikolaevich smiled almost guiltily. - The way he makes violins, I can't make ... "

And one more testimonial about Tukhachevsky the violin maker, belonging to his attending physician M.I. Kagalovsky:

"He let me irradiate the wood intended for the violin with ultraviolet rays, stained it himself, trying to achieve the best effect. And how much effort was spent on finding out the secret of priming and varnishing violins! violins!"

After Tukhachevsky, there was a special work "Information about primers and varnishes for violins", where he summarized his research in this area. In addition, Mikhail Nikolayevich managed to make several violins on his own. How many there were is remembered in different ways. Some argue that there were only two of them, and the commander made one at the beginning of his military career, and the other shortly before his tragic death. Other acquaintances of Tukhachevsky believe that there were more violins made by him. In any case, none of them has come down to us.

You involuntarily think what would have happened if, by chance or fate, Tukhachevsky had not been able to escape from German captivity in the 17th year, had not made a brilliant ascent to the heights of the army hierarchy, but had devoted himself entirely to violin making and reached the level of genius there. Then, quite possibly, he would have died a natural death, escaping with some kind of exile for the former nobility and officers. And he would have left us and all of humanity a few dozen magnificent violins, not inferior to the creations of Antonio Stradivari ... Then there would be no Tambov, and Kronstadt, and the Warsaw shame. There would be something eternal, material, a monument, part of the world cultural heritage ...

And so, in fact, today we remember Tukhachevsky only in connection with his brilliant career and tragic fate. The marshal did not have time to create the army he dreamed about. He did not win a single battle on a truly global scale, defeating only the relatively weak troops of Kolchak and Denikin. Such a battle could have been an attack on Warsaw, but, as we remember, it ended very badly for the armies of the Western Front. Tukhachevsky did not make any original contribution to military theory. He quickly responded to new trends in this area, but in general followed in the footsteps of the British - Liddell Hart and Fuller. In the preface to the latter's book *The Reformation of War*, written in 1930, Tukhachevsky emphasized the importance of Fuller's demands for increased attention to military equipment and the latest types of weapons, but reproached the British general for underestimating mass armies. And at the same time, he managed to speak commendably about the process of the Industrial Party, embroidered with white thread, and about the "liquidation of the kulak as a class." He had no political disagreements with the communists, with Stalin ... If Tukhachevsky had not been executed and he had met the 41st at the head of the Red Army, the result would have been approximately the same as in reality. After all, the defeats of the first months of the Great Patriotic War were determined by the general flaws of the Soviet system, which Tukhachevsky, with all his desire, could not eliminate. Another thing, then he would have had a chance to play in the war the role that Marshal G.K. Zhukov actually played (if they had not, of course, made him a "scapegoat" as the commander of the Western Front, General D.G. Pavlov).

I got the impression that for Tukhachevsky the making of violins and evenings in the company of composers and musicians in

free time played about the same role as the work of reorganizing the army during office hours. Violins and music helped to abstract from the far from ideal post-revolutionary world, to maintain a commitment to cultural tradition and the stability of life.

By the way, unlike the vast majority of military leaders who dutifully denigrated "Tukhachevsky and his gang" in order to soon share their fate, friends from Tukhachevsky's musical circle did not betray him even after death. Shostakovich never signed a single letter or telegram condemning the imaginary conspirators. Kulyabko, who worked as the director of the Moscow State Philharmonic, refused to stigmatize at the party meeting the one he recommended to the party, and went straight to the Gulag. When they came to arrest the professor of the Moscow Conservatory N. S. Zhilyaev, they saw a portrait of Tukhachevsky on the wall of his apartment. One of the Chekists asked in surprise: "So you haven't taken it off yet?" Nikolai Stepanovich boldly replied: "Know that a monument will be erected to him in due course." Zhilyaev did not return from the camp.

But Tukhachevsky, of course, was engaged not only and not so much in the manufacture of violins and in the organization of musical evenings and a secular salon in his spacious Moscow apartment. He developed plans for a future war and the preparation of the Red Army for it. Back in 1932, he personally (but, of course, on the instructions of the people's commissar and with the sanction of Stalin) developed a plan for a war against Poland, which included, in particular, inflicting "heavy air strikes on the Warsaw area" and turning by the end of 1932 those deployed near the Polish border Soviet rifle divisions into mechanized brigades and corps, as the tank building program develops. In a future war against Poland, it was also supposed to use, in addition to mechanized units, 94 rifle divisions and 12 cavalry divisions. Mikhail Nikolaevich longed to avenge the Warsaw shame, and therefore he developed the plan for a new "campaign for the Vistula." He made a special reservation that he deliberately did not concern "neither Romania nor Latvia", but pointed out that "it is very easy to prepare an operation of this kind against Bessarabia." However, the defeat of Poland required either direct participation in the war, or friendly neutrality on the part of Germany, in order to prevent Poland from helping Poland from England and France, help that played a decisive role in many ways in 1920. The Kremlin was well aware of this. On March 12, 1932, Voroshilov agreed to conduct joint reconnaissance with Germany against Poland. The liquidation of the Polish state brought the Red Army to the German borders. Such a development of events would have left the Weimar Republic, with its 100,000-strong Reichswehr, virtually face to face with the Soviet Union, whose armed forces numbered 885,000 by the beginning of 1933. In Berlin, this was well understood, and things did not move further than plans for the occupation of Poland at that time. But seven years later, already without Tukhachevsky, the USSR and Nazi Germany fraternally divided and liquidated the Polish state, concluding the Ribbentrop-Molotov pact.

With the advent of Hitler to power in Germany, communications between the Reichswehr and the Red Army were interrupted. The official remilitarization of the Third Reich, which began in 1935, further worsened Soviet-German relations. The newly created Wehrmacht became

considered as the main potential adversary. And Tukhachevsky, with the approval from above, wrote an article "Hitler's military plans", where he emphasized:

"The frantic, frantic policy of German National Socialism is pushing the world into a new war. But in this frantic militaristic policy, National Socialism comes up against the firm peace policy of the Soviet Union. This policy of peace is supported by tens of millions of proletarians and working people of all countries. But if, despite everything, the capitalists and their servants ignite the flames of war and risk anti-Soviet intervention, then our Red Army and our entire socialist industrial country with iron blows will turn any invading army into an army of death, and woe to those who themselves violated their borders. our socialist collective-farm country, a country with its gigantic human and industrial resources, with its great communist party and its great leader Comrade Stalin."

This article appeared in Pravda on March 31, 1935. Before that, the "great leader" himself ruled it with his own hand, in particular, replacing the heading with "Military plans of Nazi Germany" (under the title "Military plans of present-day Germany", Tukhachevsky then published another edition of this article in the Military Bulletin). All this, it would seem, meant an act of the highest confidence in the martial.

Tukhachevsky warned that Germany had already tripled its army, creating 21 divisions from 7, reaching the size of the German armed forces on the eve of the First World War. He rightly pointed out
What

"the French army, with its 20 divisions and long periods of mobilization deployment and cohesion of units, will no longer be able to

to act actively against Germany", and also that "Hitler's imperialist plans have not only an anti-Soviet edge", which "is a convenient screen for covering

revanchist plans in the west (Belgium, France) and in the south (Poznan, Czechoslovakia, Anschluss)"

(Under the Anschluss was meant the accession to the Reich of Austria).
Tukhachevsky was worried that the Wehrmacht was rapidly catching up with the Red Army in numbers (in 1935 - respectively 849 thousand against 940).

To resist the German threat, the marshal thought in alliance with France and Czechoslovakia. In this he did not disagree with Stalin. In May 1935, a Soviet-French pact and a Soviet-Czechoslovak mutual assistance pact were concluded, clearly directed against Germany. The treaty with Czechoslovakia contained a clause that mutual assistance obligations would only apply if France also provided support to the victim of aggression. In April 1936, Tukhachevsky, as part of the Soviet delegation, went to London for the funeral of King George V. On the way, he visited Paris, where he met with his long-time captive comrade Pierre Vervak, who captured in his memoirs a meeting with a civilian dressed, but as always elegant and fit marshal in one of the Parisian cafes.

" "You wrote a book about me, some parts of which upset me," said Tukhachevsky. Yes, I understand, Mikhail would prefer that I keep silent about his extravagant speeches in Ingolstadt.

the young officer, ardent, carried away, shocked by the collapse of his homeland, saw in the revolution the possibility of a future rebirth, a leap into primitive barbarism, capable of rejuvenating aged Russia. He saw in the revolution a break with Western civilization, thanks to which something new could be created. Then Tukhachevsky declared himself a futurist and claimed that he despises classical art. "Original ..." - he says to me, and as proof that he has long ceased to adhere to these paradoxical youthful judgments, he tries to convince me that he spent the whole day in the Louvre and the Rodin Museum. "What an impression! I left the Rodin Museum completely fascinated ...".

Then the conversation turned to Tukhachevsky's established reputation in Europe as a Germanophile, supported by the white émigré press. Mikhail Nikolaevich decisively refuted allegations of this kind. Fervak testifies:

"Let's clarify," Tukhachevsky told me. "Would I be here, would I go to London, if I didn't think that the Soviet-French pact, which your Chamber will hopefully ratify, is the best political combination for us. We must come to an agreement with the Western democracies. But for this we ourselves must be strong. This is what I am doing in the People's Commissariat of Defense ..."

At that moment, it was inconvenient for the Soviet marshal to recall his passion for avant-garde art in his younger years. Now the doctrine of socialist realism was officially adopted in the USSR, oriented towards classical models, which needed to be filled with Soviet specifics, the pathos of building a new one. It seemed that in foreign policy, too, Stalin was now striving to revive the traditions of the Entente and conclude an alliance with England and France against the growing strength of Germany. Such a combination fully corresponded to the views of Tukhachevsky, and he sincerely tried to put it into practice during his diplomatic mission in Western Europe. However, the Soviet dictator played a much more complex game, in the details of which he did not devote not only Tukhachevsky, but also Voroshilov and Molotov, who were much closer to him, the second person in the state, who headed the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs. Stalin alternately drew closer to each of the two groupings of states in Europe, in order to more accurately plunge them into a new world war, and to remain temporarily on the sidelines at the initial stage of the global armed conflict. The very craving of Tukhachevsky after 1933 for an unconditional alliance with England and France could seem suspicious to the leader.

In addition, the marshal was not as rosy as his boss Voroshilov looked at the state of affairs in the military department, and this could also irritate Stalin. For example, Tukhachevsky stated in *New Questions of War*:

"The advancing infantry in modern combat must be capable of complete independence. This independence is necessary up to squads and ordinary soldiers ... Infantry cannot be capable of performing modern tasks in battle if it is not capable of" self-propulsion "without waiting for orders, if all of its smallest particles are not able to penetrate between the enemy's firing centers, attack them from the flank and rear with fire, a bayonet and a grenade, without waiting for any instructions from above ... A private initiative is not

the exception, but the basic law, the basic rule of infantry action. Without the initiative of the infantry, planned, centralized command and control would result in bloody and ineffective frontal-linear clashes... spirit of "waiting for orders". That is why in recent years we have pursued such a resolute course towards the development of mobility, activity, initiative and courage among all links of our military units.

He also emphasized the need to teach fighters and commanders to skillfully and carefully manage equipment:

"Our special troops, in their technical training ... lag behind the combined arms training ... Having analyzed, for example, the training of a railway construction battalion, we will see that methods of driving piles, fastening devices, etc. are studied separately, but we do not we will see the teaching of the system of organization of labor in general during the construction of a bridge ... How machines should be placed, how people should be placed, how the greatest efficiency of work in general can be achieved in the shortest possible time, etc. - all this often remains in the shade. .. The repair of the motor is studied, but the organization of work in the repair shop as a whole is not taught.

By the way, it was the inability to properly operate and repair military equipment that became one of the main reasons for the defeat of Soviet mechanized corps in the first weeks of World War II. But then, in 1932, Tukhachevsky still had hopes that the situation would change for the better:

"Under the conditions of a future war, with its saturated technology, there will be enormous needs for repair and operational order, and here knowledge of a single detail that is not connected into a single production process will, of course, not be enough. The methods of CIT, Ford and, in general, the most advanced methods of organizing production should be introduced into the field of military training." And he made a very optimistic conclusion: "We have all the necessary prerequisites for the Red Army to have the most active and independent personnel in its composition."

However, after a few years, the marshal was disappointed. In his notes on the large maneuvers of the Moscow Military District, which took place in September 1936, he stated with regret that neither the training of fighters and commanders, nor the interaction of troops, nor the work of headquarters are at the proper level:

"The mechanized corps broke through the enemy's defensive lines from the front without artillery support. Losses should have been huge ... Actions

the mechanized corps is sluggish, the control is poor ... The actions of the mechanized corps were not supported by aviation ... Aviation was used ... not purposefully enough ... Communications did not work well ... Landing of airborne troops

fighters should be provided ... Paratroopers jump without

weapons. This must be changed... The work of headquarters, in particular intelligence, is very weak in all parts ... "

Tukhachevsky insisted that it was necessary "to teach people only what is required in the war" (these words of Mikhail Nikolayevich are quoted in his memoirs by General N. I. Koritsky). Unfortunately, this principle

as we have seen, it was not possible to fully implement it even when Tukhachevsky was the first deputy people's commissar of defense, responsible for the combat training of the troops. After his removal and execution, the need to teach the Red Army in conditions close to combat was forgotten for a long time. Some sobering up came only after the failure in the Finnish war. The new People's Commissar of Defense, S.K. Timoshenko, put forward a slogan that almost word for word coincides with Tukhachevsky's thought:

"To teach the troops only what is needed in the war, and only in the way that is done in the war."

Nevertheless, nothing radically changed in the matter of combat training until the beginning of the Great Patriotic War failed. Although the inspection conducted in the spring of 1941 concluded that there was a significant increase in the combat skills of the personnel, it turned out to be true only on paper. However, Stalin, Timoshenko and the then chief of the General Staff G.K. Zhukov were sure on the eve of June 22 that the Red Army was quite ready for a large-scale clash with the Wehrmacht. For example, Zhukov admitted in his memoirs:

"We foresaw that the war with Germany could be difficult and lengthy, but at the same time we believed that our country already had everything necessary for a long war and struggle until complete victory. Then we did not think that our armed forces would have to enter into such an unsuccessful battle war, in the very first battles suffer a heavy defeat and are forced to withdraw into the interior of the country.

It is unlikely that Tukhachevsky thought in the same way, who, like Voroshilov, Timoshenko, Zhukov and almost all other military leaders, firmly believed that in a future war the Red Army would be the attacking side, and if it had to defend itself, then not for long and only in secondary directions. . Although, of course, Mikhail Nikolaevich was much more critical than Georgy Konstantinovich assessed the state of the Soviet armed forces.

The same Zhukov, nicknamed after the war "marshal of victory", quite highly appreciated the youngest of the Soviet marshals, who was only three years older than him. In "Memoirs and Reflections" he described Tukhachevsky as "one of our most talented military theoreticians" and "the greatest experts in military affairs", who in this respect was much higher than People's Commissar Voroshilov.

"We all felt that he was playing the main leading role in the People's Commissariat of Defense,"

- Zhukov wrote, calling Tukhachevsky "a giant of military thought" and "a star of the first magnitude in a galaxy of outstanding military leaders of the Red Army."

Undoubtedly, both Stalin and Voroshilov himself felt this, and both of them did not experience much joy on this occasion. Tukhachevsky

after all - from the "former", although he joined the party a long time ago. And his desire to educate cadres of independent and enterprising fighters and commanders and protect the Red Army from excessive tutelage on the part of politicians aroused suspicion: is he really planning to repeat the path of Bonaparte?

Stalin needed an absolutely obedient army of mindless executors, which could be abandoned at any moment both to suppress unrest within the country and to carry out a new campaign to the West to ensure the triumph of the "world revolution". As the great war approached, the dictator became more and more afraid

Tukhachevsky: under the command of the former lieutenant of the guards there will be huge forces and would he want to move them to Moscow, and not to Warsaw and Berlin?

All Tukhachevsky's ideas about increasing the combat effectiveness of the Red Army under the conditions of a totalitarian communist regime, which did not need independent-minded people, including the military, could not be fully implemented. Therefore, the Red Army could only win with a lot of blood and was inferior to the main potential enemy, the Wehrmacht, in terms of the level of combat training.

In April 1936, a year before his death, Tukhachevsky developed and conducted a large operational-strategic staff game, where a possible scenario for a war between the USSR and Germany was worked out. We know about the course of this game only from the testimony at the investigation in the case of the "military-fascist conspiracy", and from the rather meager memoirs of its participants - Colonel G. S. Isserson, who compiled the task for the game, and Lieutenant General A. I. Todorsky, who commanded during the game one of the formations on the German side, all the troops of which were commanded by Tukhachevsky. The troops of Germany's ally - Poland, were led by the then commander of the Kyiv military district, I. E. Yakir, and the Soviet Western Front was headed by the commander of the Belorussian military district, I. P. Uborevich. According to the memoirs of Isserson and Todorsky, the General Staff of the Red Army believed that Germany could at that moment mobilize up to 100 divisions, of which half would be thrown to the front north of Polesie to march on Moscow, where they would be helped by another 30 Polish divisions. The game turned into a frontal clash in which the Red Army, with about 100 divisions, eventually won.

In his own testimony at the investigation dated June 1, 1937, Tukhachevsky outlined the results of the game as follows:

"This game gave us the opportunity to think over operational capabilities and weigh the chances of victory for both sides, both in general and in separate areas, for individual participants in the conspiracy (that is, for I.P. Uborevich and I.E. Yakir, while time commanding respectively the Belorussian and Kiev military districts, which with the outbreak of war were to turn into the Belorussian and Ukrainian fronts. - B. S.) As a result of this game, preliminary assumptions were confirmed that the forces (number of divisions) put up by the Red Army for mobilization, are not sufficient to fulfill the tasks assigned to it on the western borders. Assuming the assumption that the main German forces would be thrown into the Ukrainian direction, I came to the conclusion that if our operational plan was not amended, then first the Ukrainian, and then the Belorussian fronts would be threatened by a very possible defeat ... I gave the task to Yakir and Uborevich for a thorough

elaboration of an operational plan in Ukraine and Belarus..."

A certain artificiality of the military-political introductions to the game is striking. In 1936, there was no need to talk about the German-Polish alliance, since Hitler made serious territorial claims against Poland - the lands of the German Empire that had gone to Warsaw under the Versailles Peace Treaty. In addition, the Fuhrer questioned the very existence of an independent Polish state. The Kremlin could not but know this, and Tukhachevsky could not but know. I think it's pretty silly

he needed the construction of joint actions of the Wehrmacht and the Polish army in order to disguise the true, aggressive Soviet goals in front of the ordinary participants in the game. Most likely, Stalin intended to first defeat and occupy Poland, in alliance with Germany or alone, and then, choosing the right moment (best of all, when Germany would be shackled by the war in the West), attack the Wehrmacht with all the might of the Red Army. And in 1935 it numbered 930 thousand people, and by the beginning of 1938 - already 1513 thousand, significantly surpassing the Wehrmacht in terms of numbers and weapons. At the beginning of 1936, the Soviet armed forces already had 4 mechanized corps, 6 separate mechanized brigades and 6 tank regiments, while in Germany, which had just abandoned the military restrictions of the Versailles Treaty, tank and mechanized formations were just beginning to form. Probably, during the game of 1936, the mythical Polish divisions on the German side were only supposed to demonstrate the aggressiveness of Germany, as if they were going to attack the USSR together with Poland. And replace the real German divisions, the number of which was deliberately underestimated. After all, Tukhachevsky quite rightly believed that Germany was capable of deploying about 200 divisions in the future, so that on the front north of Polesie, where Army Groups North and Center were advancing in 1941, the Wehrmacht would be able to concentrate at least 80 divisions. According to the game, it turned out that way, only 30 German divisions were replaced by Polish ones. I note that Tukhachevsky's forecast turned out to be accurate - on the eve of the attack on the USSR, Hitler had a little more than 200 divisions. It is also interesting that, although, according to the terms of the game, the Soviet Union was attacked by Germany and Poland, the factor of surprise was not taken into account in any way, and the deployment of the Red Army proceeded unhindered, without any influence from the enemy. In addition, the Wehrmacht used only half of its forces against the USSR, keeping the rest in the West, as if there had already been a war with England, France, and perhaps also with Czechoslovakia, with which the Soviet Union had an agreement on mutual assistance. All this suggests: Tukhachevsky believed that the Red Army would be the first to start a war with Germany, and only after Hitler got involved in a war with the Western powers.

The time of the Second World War was steadily approaching. And Tukhachevsky did not know that in proportion to this his fall was drawing near. Stalin did not need an overly independent marshal in this war. Lydia Nord recalled that the final quarrel between them occurred shortly after July 18, 1936 - the day the Spanish Civil War began. Tukhachevsky allegedly opposed the idea of sending regular formations of the Red Army to help the Spanish Republicans. Mikhail Nikolayevich pointed out that the remoteness of the theater of operations and dependence on France for supplies would put

Soviet troops in Spain in a very dangerous position. And he proposed to limit himself to sending a few advisers and volunteers, as well as the supply of weapons and military equipment. Stalin allegedly agreed, but harbored a grudge against Tukhachevsky, who invaded the sphere of big politics too freely. Like it or not, we do not know for sure. But, in any case, it was from the summer of 1936 that

the intrigue against the marshal enters its final phase. In August, commanders V. M. Primakov, V. K. Putna and several other commanders of the Red Army were arrested. Their testimony will appear in the Tukhachevsky case, and Vitaly Markovich and Vitovt Kazimirovich will have to sit in the dock with the marshal in a few months.

By that time, Tukhachevsky's connections had weakened in party political circles. Back in January 1935, VV Kuibyshev died of a heart attack. In February 37, G. K. Ordzhonikidze, who had entered into a sharp conflict with Stalin, shot himself. There was no one at the top to protect Tukhachevsky. In addition, Stalin could remember that once Tukhachevsky offered Sergo, who turned out to be a "troublemaker", to the post of head of the military department, and this memory could only strengthen his determination to deal with the marshal.

It was not in vain that G.K. Zhukov paid so many compliments to Tukhachevsky. Georgy Konstantinovich felt that in the end he had taken that place in the army and played that role in the war that, had it not been for the arrest and trial in June 1937, would have been reserved for the youngest and most talented of the Soviet marshals. True, he told the writer Konstantin Simonov that he puts Uborevich no lower than Tukhachevsky:

"Tukhachevsky was more erudite in matters of strategy, but I would not give him preference over Uborevich. Both in the general nature of his thinking and in his military experience, Tukhachevsky was erudite in matters of strategy. He dealt with them a lot, thought about them and wrote about them. He had a deep, calm, analytical mind.

Uborevich was more concerned with issues of operational art and tactics. He was a great connoisseur of both, and an unsurpassed educator of the troops. In this sense, in my opinion, he was three heads taller than Tukhachevsky, who was characterized by a certain lordliness, neglect of the rough daily work. This was reflected in his origin and upbringing.

Tutu Georgy Konstantinovich, as it seems, "class solidarity" prevailed. Uborevich, like himself, came from a poor peasant family and, voluntarily or involuntarily, Zhukov opposed the pillar nobleman Tukhachevsky. Under the command of Jerome Petrovich, Georgy Konstantinovich served for a long time in the Belarusian Military District and had the warmest feelings for him. But after all, Zhukov himself in his memoirs cited an episode of how Tukhachevsky personally corrected the draft cavalry combat manual submitted by him, together with several other cavalry commanders, and how they were "disarmed by the weighty and logical objections of M. N. Tukhachevsky" and "thankful to him for those brilliant the provisions with which he enriched the drafts ... of the statutes. As you can see, quite a rough job. And, I will add, Zhukov admits that he last saw Mikhail Nikolayevich in 1931, six years before his death, and, therefore, cannot judge the last, most important years of Tukhachevsky's work as deputy people's commissar. Besides, how

we have already seen that the "red marshal" was not at all a bad educator of fighters and commanders, for almost six years he commanded such large districts as Western and Leningrad, what daily command of troops was, he knew very well in practice. And he conducted major maneuvers personally, and made very sensible remarks about them.

I believe that Zhukov was aware that Tukhachevsky was more educated and more talented than him. And he solved a difficult problem in his memoirs. On the one hand, to pay tribute to the predecessor in order to show how significant a figure he actually had to replace during the Great Patriotic War. On the other hand, it was required to convince readers and interlocutors that and besides. Tukhachevsky, the commanders in the Red Army were no worse, and in some respects even better. Therefore, there is nothing surprising, they say, that he, Zhukov, successfully coped with his task, more successfully than the marshal shot in the 37th could have done. And let's try to ask ourselves this question: who, in fact, would have fought more successfully in the 41st - Tukhachevsky, Uborevich, Putna or Zhukov, Rokossovsky and other Soviet generals? Everyone is free to answer it in their own way, but for some reason it seems to me that Tukhachevsky, for all his shortcomings as a commander, would not have thrown divisions into an attack in equestrian formation on a pre-prepared defense and without artillery preparation, as Rokossovsky did near Moscow in November 1941. And another marttal, A. I. Eremenko, would never have written in his diary about Tukhachevsky what he wrote about Zhukov in February 1943:

"It should be said that Zhukovsky's operational art is 5-6 times superior in strength, otherwise he will not get down to business, he does not know how to fight not in numbers and builds his career on blood."

I suspect that Tukhachevsky would have achieved a more favorable ratio of losses, although they would still have remained in favor of the Wehrmacht. After all, the organic vices of the Soviet system, which manifested themselves in the Red Army, Mikhail Nikolayevich still could not eliminate. But he would probably have fought more competently than Zhukov. And, probably, he would have been more in his place in the role of chief of the General Staff or commander of one of the main fronts. If you mentally put Manstein or Eisenhower at the head of the Red Army, they would most likely do a lot of trouble there, or they would try to lead the Soviet troops by standards applicable to the experience of Western armies. And Tukhachevsky served in the Red Army from its very birth, knew all its features, vices and virtues ...

Perhaps the fate of Zhukov was more successful than that of Tukhachevsky (although by no means cloudless), because, in particular, he was not so brilliant and talented. Georgy Konstantinovich himself quotes the words of the head of communications of the Red Army RR. V. Longva about Tukhachevsky:

"We won't be a sycophant, he won't praise Stalin..."

It is difficult to accuse Zhukov of sycophancy, but it is impossible not to admit that if he argued with Stalin, it was only on specific operational issues, and not on problems of a big strategy or the organization of the armed forces as a whole. In a conversation with Konstantin Simonov, Zhukov recalled an episode in which Tukhachevsky was not afraid to sharply object to Voroshilov when he presented the draft charters:

"For all his calmness, Tukhachevsky knew how to show firmness

and to fight back when he considered it necessary ... Voroshilov, on some of the points ... began to express dissatisfaction and offer something that did not go to the point. Tukhachevsky, after listening to him, said in his usual, calm voice: "Comrade People's Commissar, the commission cannot accept your amendments." - "Why?" asked Voroshilov. "Because your amendments are incompetent, Comrade People's Commissar."

To such mocking politeness towards

Zhukov was not capable of superiors. Although we must not forget that his career unfolded mainly after the execution of Tukhachevsky, and the "marshal of victory" understood well to what extent one could argue with Stalin and other members of the Politburo and what threatens to go beyond these limits. Georgy Konstantinovich got burned, in fact, for boasting. He spoke to too many people and too often about his decisive role in the development and foresight of the main operations of the Great Patriotic War. What hurt the pride not only of Stalin, but also of other generals and marshals. But in the political front, or even in an attempt to make the army independent of party and Chekist control, the generalissimo, it seems, still did not suspect Zhukov. And he limited himself not to execution, but to an honorary exile in a secondary military district. Zhukov, Stalin was not afraid. Apparently, he saw that apart from firmness, bordering on cruelty, the commander had nothing behind his soul. And he, Stalin's, unlimited power, he cannot threaten. But in the brilliant, intelligent, talented Tukhachevsky, he unmistakably saw the threat. And chose to get rid of it. Let in the upcoming campaign in Western Europe the Red Army be led by not so outstanding and bright, but devoted commanders - Voroshilov, Budyonny, Shaposhnikov, Zhukov, Kirponos, Pavlov ... True, the leader preferred to shoot the latter in the first weeks of the war in order to blame him responsibility for the disaster. And before the victory in a high command position, only Zhukov remained. The rest - Rokossovsky, Konev, Vasilevsky, Chernyakhovsky and others were nominated for command of the fronts already during the war. But in general, the generalissimo did not miscalculate: he had enough generals and marshals to crush the Wehrmacht and occupy Eastern Europe. There are no irreplaceable people. And is it Tukhachevsky, Ubovich, Petrov, Sidorov - isn't everything one?

The well-known aircraft designer A. S. Yakovlev, favored by Stalin and honored to dine at his dacha, recalled how once in a conversation the Secretary General cited an example of the enmity of the ancient Greek commanders Miltiades and Themistocles, gleaned from the Encyclopedic Dictionary of Brockhaus and Efron, each of whom envied the glory of the other. Surely, Joseph Vissarionovich knew another textbook legend from ancient history, cited, in particular, in Aristotle's "Politics", which tells how the tyrant of Corinth Periander did not respond to the request of his friend the tyrant Miletus Thrasybulus, transmitted through the herald, to advise on how best to govern the state, and, "pulling out those ears that stood out too much for their height, he leveled the sown field; the herald, not understanding what was the matter, reported to Thrasybulus about what he had seen, and he understood Periander's act in the sense that prominent people should be killed." Tukhachevsky was precisely for Stalin such an ear towering above the others, which sooner or later will have to be pulled out in order to level the military leadership with gray mediocrities like Voroshilov. The leader was just waiting for the time. The deadline came in the 37th.

Tukhachevsky's conspiracy: truth and myth

On June 6, 1937, newspapers published excerpts from the speech of the head of the capital's communists, Nikita Sergeevich Khrushchev, at the Moscow Regional Party Conference. Telling the region's communists about what happened at the city conference, he said indignantly that, although the city committee

"proven Bolsheviks devoted to the cause of the party were elected ... the Trotskyist traitor, traitor to the Motherland, enemy of the people Gamarnik also got into the composition of the Civil Code. This fact once again indicates that the enemy is vilely disguised."

The listeners must have experienced the deepest shock. After all, the vilely disguised traitor and traitor Yan Borisovich Gamarnik not only bore the high rank of army commissar T rank and served as head of the Political Directorate of the Red Army, but was also a member of the Central Committee of the party. However, by that time he was no longer alive. On May 31, when NKVD officers appeared in his apartment, Gamarnik, who already knew about the arrest of Tukhachevsky and had no doubt that he would share his fate, found the only way to avoid a shameful trial and inevitable execution - he shot himself. Neither the conference delegates nor the readers of Pravda knew about this yet. Khrushchev's words became the first mention in the press of what would soon be called a "military fascist conspiracy." It became clear to everyone: something was happening at the top of the army. But until June 11, the population of the country remained in the dark about what exactly. On that day, a report appeared in the newspapers under the heading "In the Prosecutor's Office of the USSR" about the case of "Tukhachevsky, Yakir, Uborevich, Kork, Eideman, Feldman, Primakov and Putna, arrested by the NKVD at various times", accused "of violating military duty (oath), treason to the Motherland, treason to the peoples of the USSR, treason to the Red Army." It was claimed that

"investigative materials established the participation of the accused, as well as Ya. B. Gamarnik, who committed suicide, in anti-state ties with the leading military circles of one of the foreign states, pursuing an unfriendly policy towards the USSR. information about the state of the Red Army, tried to prepare in the event of a military attack on the USSR, the defeat of the Red Army and had as their goal to help restore the power of the landowners and capitalists in the USSR. All those accused of the charges against them pleaded guilty in full. "

The consideration of the case was announced at a closed session of the Special Judicial Presence of the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court of the USSR in the manner prescribed by law of December 1, 1934. This law, adopted immediately after the assassination of Kirov, provided for the accelerated consideration of charges of terrorism and counter-revolution, without the participation of the defense and without the right to appeal against sentences and petitions for pardon, which were carried out immediately. The entire trial of Tukhachevsky and his comrades took one day, June 11th. They were shot on the night of the 12th, and in the morning of the same day the verdict was published in the newspapers. As was customary then, he received the unanimous approval of the working class, the collective farm peasantry and the working intelligentsia. Among those who approved were artists of the Art Theater Leonid Leonidov and Nikolai Khmelev, brothers Academicians S. I. and N. I. Vavilov (one of them was destined to die in prison a few years later, and the other to preside at the Academy),

writers, "engineers of human souls" Alexander Fadeev and Vsevolod Vishnevsky, Alexei Tolstoy and Nikolai Tikhonov, Mikhail Sholokhov and Leonid Leonov, Alexander Serafimovich and Anton Makarenko ... No investigation and court materials were published until the early 60s, but in

In the second half of the 1930s, the intellectuals, like the rest of the people, knew that the organs do not make mistakes, and whoever thinks otherwise runs the risk of falling straight into their tenacious paws. The collective letter of the masters of culture demanded the "execution of spies":

"Together with the people, we say in unison - we will not let the enemies of the Soviet Union live."

Just like Bulgakov: "Yes, he died, he died ... But we are alive, after all." True, the authors of the letters and telegrams did not yet know the verdict, they did not know that the disgraced military leaders were already dead, but they were not mistaken in the verdict, concluding from the text of the message of June 11 that Tukhachevsky and others were already dead people, even if they lived a few more hours or days.

When did the path of the "red marshal" to the chopping block begin? To answer this question, we have to go back a decade and a half, to the early 1920s. Then the name of Tukhachevsky was popular not only among the soldiers and commanders of the Red Army, but also among the officers and politicians of the white camp who ended up in exile. Here, for example, is a curious document - the intelligence report of the Russian army settled in the Balkans by Baron P. N. Wrangel dated February 15, 1922. It stated in particular:

"The only environment in Russia that could take an active role in overthrowing Soviet power is the command staff of the Red Army, that is, former Russian officers. They are a caste, soldered by discipline and common interests; war and life instilled in them the will ... "

And then the one with whom the emigration pins certain hopes is named:

"Persons who knew Tukhachevsky closely indicate that he is a man of outstanding abilities and with great administrative and military talent. But he is not without some ambition and, conscious of his strength and authority, fancies himself a Russian Napoleon. They even say that he tries to imitate in everything Napoleon and constantly reads his biography and history. In a friendly conversation, Tukhachevsky, when he was reproached for communism, said more than once: "Wasn't Napoleon a Jacobin? .." command positions, the idea of a single military dictatorship is not alien.

Here the desired is presented as reality. The overwhelming majority of former officers who served in the Red Army at that moment were not thinking about a coup, but about how to survive, maintain their position and rations (after the end of the civil war, they had already begun to be dismissed, and some were even repressed). Those who thought of a coup have long since died or found themselves outside of Russia. Those who remained were already thinking only about organizing their own lives, and not about overthrowing Soviet power. It would seem that the leaders of the Wrangel army should have asked themselves the question: why did the former lieutenants and staff captains, lieutenant colonels and generals serving in the red

did not use the much more favorable time of the civil war for the coup, when at times many thought that the power of the Bolsheviks was hanging by a thread? It was worth asking this question, and the intelligence report, solidly titled "Commanders and military experts of the Red Army", should have been immediately sent to the wastebasket. Instead, an unknown official imposed on the document the same

solid resolution: "Very interesting." Well, as you know, hope dies last.

And one more interesting document - the minutes of the meeting of the Russian National Committee in Finland dated February 29, 1924, found by the soldiers of the Red Army at the Raivola border station during the "unfamous" Finnish war. The religious philosopher and church historian, Cadet A. V. Kartashev presided over that meeting. In addition to him, 17 people were present, including the former leader of the Octobrists in the State Duma, industrialist A. I. Guchkov, well-known publicists V. L. Burtsev and D. S. Pasmanik, generals Yu. N. Danilov and P. N. Shatilov (the latter is the chief of staff of the Wrangel army). The question of the mood in Russia was discussed. Guchkov shared information obtained through undercover means:

"They say that the split is great and irreparable, there is no way out without a violent coup. A coup is only possible military, or palace, or on a larger scale. The power itself is so weak that its overthrow is inevitable. A red dictatorship will be installed in its place (as if in 24 There was some kind of "red democracy"! - B. S.). A typical figure is Tukhachevsky, sitting in Smolensk. According to one well-informed German, he enjoys great charm among the masses (after Tambov and Kronstadt ?! - B. S.). Some time ago he was taken under suspicion, summoned to Moscow. It was supposed to give him an honorary, but not influential post. He refused to leave on a call. There is a pogrom mood in Smolensk against the Communists and Jews. Open agitation is going on in the garrison itself " .

The following is a comment that most likely belongs to Guchkov:

"The group best suited to the vital interests of Russia is the group of Rykov, Krasin, Sokolnikov. Trotsky could join them. Rykov is a man of strong will."

I can't help but comment on the comments. He is unique in his own way. Literally everything has been twisted here. One group brings together persons who actually belong to different party factions. It is anecdotal that the drunken alcoholic AI Rykov, despite the high post of chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, who never played an independent political role, is called a strong-willed person. And Trotsky, who "joined Rykov," is generally something transcendent, lying beyond reality, not even perceived as an anecdote. This passage shows the true level of awareness and ability to analyze the situation in Russia, characteristic of the thinkers of emigration. And also to representatives of foreign intelligence services, since, as it is clear from Guchkov's report, he relied, among others, on materials from German intelligence or the Foreign Ministry:

"There has been a recent change in the Germans' assessment of the situation in Russia. They used to believe in evolution. Now they consider a military coup, if not inevitable, then probable.

They also point to Tukhachevsky. They do not undertake only to predict who will replace the government, whose fate is predetermined, they also recognize the complete economic collapse of Soviet power (which, as history has shown, was still 57 years away. - B.S.). As the center weakens, the population grows bolder.

As you can see, in German circles they began to look closely at Tukhachevsky as a potential "red Bonaparte" very early. NEP and

the beginning of the inner-party struggle for the Leninist legacy between the supporters of Trotsky and Stalin gave rise to doubts among the Germans about the strength of the Bolshevik rule. And yet, the same Kartashev found the strength at the end of the protocol to make a pessimistic but true CONCLUSION:

"The center of power is still very strong, it is premature to talk about its fall. Even Trotsky is not dangerous to it. Suspicious elements in the army have been destroyed."

And again food for thought. In the period from November 1921 to April 1927, the OGPU bodies carried out undercover development under the code name "Trust". This story is well known to readers from the novel "Dead Swell" by Tukhachevsky's biographer Lev Nikulin and from the serial television version of this work - "Operation" Trust "". So, it turns out that Mikhail Nikolayevich himself was used by the Chekists to cover up the "Trust", although he did not even know about it. Let me remind you the essence of the combination developed by the OGPU. It was - the existence of a powerful underground "Monarchist Organization of Central Russia", abbreviated as MOCR, was legendary. With its help, the Chekists established contact with the main emigrant centers and revealed a significant part of their agents in the USSR, and also for some time actually paralyzed the activities of the Russian All-Military Union in Russia, into which the Russian Army was transformed in September 24th. The leadership of the ROVS was convinced that all operations in the homeland should be carried out through the MOPR, that is, in fact, under the control of the OGPU. And to give the organization more solidity in the eyes of foreign partners, among others, the popular name of Tukhachevsky was used.

In December 1922, the head of the MOPR, OGPU agent, engineer A. A. Yakushev, a hereditary nobleman, by the way, met in Berlin with the chairman of the Supreme Monarchist Council N. E. Markov 2, who at one time was one of the leaders of the extreme right in the State Duma. He asked Yakushev if the MOPR included such military leaders as Tukhachevsky, S. S. Kamenev, and the HRC. P. Lebedev and A. A. Brusilov. Alexander Alexandrovich, as he wrote in a report addressed to the Lubyanka, readily replied: "They are not officially part of the organization, but the first three are definitely ours, and the fourth is too old and does not represent anything interesting." Later, Mikhail Nikolayevich was made a full member of the IOCR. How this happened was described in a report on the operation "Trust" compiled in 1931 by an employee of the special department of the OGPU Styne:

"Repeatedly, we were recommended from abroad to involve Tukhachevsky in the Trust. Especially the monarchist youth wanted to see in him the Russian Bonaparte, suggesting that he was only pretending to be a communist, in reality he was a monarchist. still that - right

Chekhovskiy: "Passing past the station, my hat flew off." - B.S.) that Tukhachevsky was attracted to the Trust. There (not in the "Trust", of course, but abroad. - B.S.) this message had an effect ... "

In the light of the KGB confessions, it remains to be seen whether the documents of the émigré organizations cited above reflect the disinformation coming from the OGPU about Tukhachevsky the counter-revolutionary or the émigré aspirations about the "red Bonaparte" independent of her,

for the role of which Mikhail Nikolayevich seemed the most suitable candidate. Indeed, even without the efforts of the Chekists, rumors could reach the emigration about the very real conflicts between Tukhachevsky and political workers in Smolensk (most likely, these rumors were reflected in Guchkov's report at a meeting of the Russian National Committee). In addition, up to a certain point, Tukhachevsky almost exactly repeated the career of Napoleon, and the emigrant officers really wanted him to follow the path of "first consul" and further, becoming the gravedigger of the revolution. The Chekists, on the other hand, took into account the longing of emigration for a strong anti-Bolshevik government and willingly put forward candidates for future monarchist dictators. And, of course, Dzerzhinsky, Menzhinsky, Yagoda and their associates were well aware that Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaevich, the same Markov 2nd and right hand of Wrangel, General Kutepov (Wrangel himself understood the provocative role of "Grest" from the very beginning) would rather believe in monarchical feelings of former tsarist generals and officers, like N. M. Potapov, S. S. Kamenev, Tukhachevsky or A. M. Zayonchkovskiy. At the same time, the leaders of the OGPU were well aware that no one abroad would have believed that the Lugansk locksmith Klim Voroshilov or the former Zemgusar, that is to say, was inclined towards the ideas of restoring the monarchy an employee of the Union of Zemstvos and cities that supplied the Russian army with everything necessary during the First World War, Mikhail Frunze (aka Mikhailov), sentenced to death by the tsarist court, and joined the Bolshevik Party back in 1904. Here Tukhachevsky is another matter. And the biography is Napoleonic, and the nobility is pillar, and the appearance is suitable. I will only make a reservation that the arrogance in facial expression and imitation in the very appearance of Bonaparte, often attributed to Mikhail Nikolayevich, had an absolutely prosaic reason, which had nothing to do with the "Napoleonic complex." Tukhachevsky suffered from Graves' disease, which is why his eyes were somewhat bulging, and his neck was straight and towering above the collar of his uniform. Lydia Nord testifies: "He couldn't stand it when something tightened his neck - it" choked him. he does it in order to "show off the beauty of the neck. "There was also a slight bulging of the eyes, which became more noticeable when he worked long and hard." Hence the legend about the "Bonapartist" appearance and manners of the "red marshal" was born.

At the end of 1923 or at the beginning of 1924, someone decided that in the operation "Grest" the OGPU with Tukhachevsky, as they say, went too far, and instructed to stop using him in the case with the MOCR. From whom this instruction came, it has not yet been clarified. It is possible that this was the head of the military department, Trotsky, who feared that the name of one of the popular commanders would be compromised in the emigre press due to the leakage of information about his alleged connections with the monarchists, which, in turn,

turn, hit the prestige of the Red Army. But the Chekists took Tukhachevsky out of the game in a rather peculiar way. Styne wrote about this in detail:

"Since it was considered inconvenient to 'count' Tukhachevsky as part of

"Grest" and an order was received to stop the game with his last name (if the order really came from Trotsky, then it is understandable why Styne in the 31st year did not name the former chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council expelled from the country. - B. S.) , - I had to withdraw him from the "Trust" for abroad. But this had to be done gradually. We wrote that Zayonchkovsky, the head of the "Trust" (who at that time did not yet know that he was a member of some kind of counter-revolutionary organization), contrary to the decision of the political council, did not allow Tukhachevsky to practice and that on this basis a serious the conflict between Zayonchkovsky and other leaders of the "Trust", things allegedly reached the point that the largest leaders of the "Trust" are forced to resign and are waiting for a replacement. This maneuver gave some respite, since in the role of those who had left but had not yet given up their positions, the trust leaders might not show any special activity for some time. The work of the organization has temporarily stalled.

A few weeks later, the ICR was "revived". Stirne wrote the following about this:

"It was decided to announce that the 'conflict' had been settled and Tukhachevsky was left alone. Paris burst into a series of letters in which he expressed his pleasure at the elimination of all misunderstandings." Although among the Parisian emigration "Trust" again appeared as a monolithic entity that successfully overcame internal friction, and the Chekists successfully eliminated the "misunderstanding" created by them, such "misunderstandings" in relation to Tukhachevsky were just beginning. After all, what impression should have been created among foreign monarchists: the victor of Kolchak and Denikin is downright eager for active anti-Soviet work in order to prove in practice his long and carefully concealed hatred of the Bolsheviks, but only the old general Zayonchkovsky does not allow him to work. Either he is overly cautious, or he sees in Tukhachevsky a dangerous competitor who seeks to lead the army of a new Russia liberated from the Bolsheviks or, what the hell is not joking, even become the new Russian emperor. Yes, by the grace of Dzerzhinsky, Tukhachevsky found himself in a very ambiguous position in the eyes of the Parisian émigré public and intelligence agencies associated with it. It turned out that now Tukhachevsky was going to fight the Soviet government on his own, without any "Trusts"-MOCRs there. And wouldn't it be possible to risk sending emissaries to him and suddenly something good would come of it?

I have a strong feeling that the OGPU workers ahead of time, back in the mid-20s, were preparing compromising evidence on the "socially alien" Tukhachevsky, perhaps it will come in handy when it will be necessary to stop the commander walking up the steps of the military hierarchy too quickly.

And in exile they continued to closely follow Tukhachevsky. In October 1926, the OGPU agent Vlasov announced his meeting with Kutepov, who

"For some reason, he showed particular interest in Comrade Tukhachevsky,

asked if he could be drawn into the ranks of the supporters of the national movement.

In April 1927, one of the main characters in the Grest operation, OGPU agent Eduard Ottovich Oppenput (aka Pavel Ivanovich Selyaninov, aka Staunitz, aka Kasatkin - this adventurer has names from

dark biography was innumerable) fled to Finland and revealed an ingenious Chekist combination. After that, the Polish intelligence very thoroughly checked the report of Tukhachevsky to the Chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council dated March 19, 1927, which had just been received through the IOCR. And by the end of 1928, she found out that she was dealing with ordinary disinformation, designed to exaggerate the combat power of the Red Army. All the data presented in the report were refuted by information obtained from other sources. This circumstance once again convinced the Poles that the unfortunate conqueror of Warsaw faithfully serves the Bolsheviks and does not think of any monarchical coups. But Warsaw did not share its conclusions about Tukhachevsky with the ROVS and other emigrant organizations: intelligence is a delicate occupation that does not tolerate excessive publicity.

And Kutepov continued to hope that sooner or later Tukhachevsky would become a "red Bonaparte", would help the veterans of the white movement to hoist double-headed eagles on the Kremlin towers. On July 28, he discussed with another OGPU agent, a certain Popov, the possibility of establishing a "firm and strong dictatorship" for the transitional period from the Soviet Republic to the monarchy and tried to find out how, in connection with this, the "Internal Russian National Organization" (another Chekist "Trust") evaluates Tukhachevsky. Earlier, another emigrant, historian S. TsP. Melgunov, Popov told that VNRO intended to make Tukhachevsky a dictator. But this time the agent answered Kutepov cautiously:

"We chose this candidate only because we did not find in our ranks a person who enjoys such popularity and sympathy in the army and among the population as Tukhachevsky."

And much earlier, at the end of 1925, the same Popov fooled around about Tukhachevsky to another emigrant general, V.V. Biskupsky, who represented those monarchists who supported the rights to the throne of Grand Duke Kirill Vladimirovich. In the report

agent wrote:

"... When I told him (Biskupsky. - B. S.) with a few strokes painted Tukhachevsky as the purest Bonapartist, he told us to promise him that the sovereign (Kirill Vladimirovich. - B. S.) would appoint him adjutant wing if he comes over to our side at the right moment, and in general we would not skimp on any rewards for people we need, if this can win them over to our side.

I suspect that the agent made a little mistake here, either because he wrote the report in a hurry, or because of ignorance of the court hierarchy. It is absolutely unbelievable that on behalf of the Grand Duke Biskupsky promised Tukhachevsky for supporting the monarchical coup only an adjutant wing, the honorary rank of officers of the imperial retinue with a rank no higher than a colonel. This award would be suitable for a second lieutenant of the Guards, but not for someone who was one of the leaders of the Red Army and held the positions of a general, if

not marshals. Most likely, Biskupsky then promised Tukhachevsky the rank of adjutant general, which was assigned to full generals and lieutenant generals in the retinue. Although this, in any case, would have seemed to Mikhail Nikolayevich not enough - he clearly dreamed of a marshal's

wand.

Also in London, representatives of the non-existent VRNO should

were to tell emigrants, as well as representatives of British political circles, that, "taking into account the properties of character, popularity, both in society, and especially in the army, and with life preparation," the organization scheduled Tukhachevsky for the role of dictator, "who, of course, does not know this, but his environment in this case ... is prepared in the right direction. Therefore, the envoys of VRNO concluded:

"We have no doubt that at the decisive moment he will be with us and at the head of us."

It seems that Tukhachevsky is not a traitor, but an unreliable person for Soviet power - at a decisive moment he will take it and go over to the whites.

The OGPU, having created a rather ambiguous reputation for Tukhachevsky abroad, did not leave him with their worries at home either. Back in 1924, such well-known military leaders and military theorists from the "former" as S. S. Kamenev, I. I. Vatsetis, Tukhachevsky, M. D. Bonch-Bruевич (brother of the business manager Council of People's Commissars), A. A. Svechin, A. E. Snesev ... The first report not from abroad, but from the territory of the USSR about Tukhachevsky's Bonapartism came from Ovsyannikov, an informant agent, in December 1925. It said:

"At present, among the cadre officers and the generals, 2 trends have most come to light: the monarchist ... and the Bonapartist, the concentration of which takes place around M.N. Tukhachevsky."

Ovsyannikov named a number of former tsarist officers who supposedly constituted the "Tukhachevsky circle." Some of these officers were recruited by the OGPU, but they could not (or did not want to) report anything compromising Mikhail Nikolayevich.

Tukhachevsky was also developed by the old trusted agent Zayonchkovskaya, the daughter of a general who died in 1926. She met the German journalist Gerbing, who was in Moscow. He told her, in particular, that Tukhachevsky and S. S. Kamenev, independently of each other, work for the German General Staff. Gerbing was known for his connections with German intelligence. However, his testimonies were worth little. The fact is that back in 1927 Opperput publicly exposed Zayonchkovskaya as an agent of the OGPU. And Gerbing told her about Tukhachevsky's work for German intelligence only in 1929. The Germans deliberately misinformed the Soviet side about Tukhachevsky. And they had their reasons for that. Occupying the highest positions in the Red Army, Tukhachevsky played far from the last role in the military cooperation between the USSR and Germany. In 1932, he visited the Reichswehr maneuvers and several German military factories, and was in constant contact with German generals and officers who came to Moscow. However, the latter, despite all the diplomacy inherent in Mikhail Nikolayevich,

there was a strong impression that Tukhachevsky was hostile to Germany and saw in her the main potential adversary. So, in 1931, the German ambassador to the USSR G. von Dirksen emphasized in one of his letters that Tukhachevsky

"far from being that straightforward and likeable person who spoke so openly in favor of the German orientation, which was Uborevich (Tukhachevsky's predecessor as head of armaments of the Red Army. - B.S.). He is rather closed, smart, restrained."

Uborevich, "an unsurpassed educator of the troops," to use Zhukovsky's definition, did not hide his admiration for the German army. He wrote directly in his account of his thirteen-month stay in Germany in 1927-1928 in connection with his studies at the military academy:

"The Germans are for us so far the only outlet through which we can study the achievements in military affairs abroad, moreover, from the army, which has very interesting achievements in a number of issues. We must now shift the focus of gravity to the use of the technical achievements of the Germans, mainly in the sense that we learn from ourselves how to build and use the latest means of combat: tanks, improvements in aviation, anti-tank weapons, communications equipment, etc. ... German specialists, including those of military affairs, are immeasurably superior to us ... "

It is no coincidence that adviser of the German embassy in Moscow von Twardowski, in a letter dated September 25, 1933, to adviser to the German Foreign Ministry W. von Toppelskirch, brother of the famous military historian General K. von Toppelskirch, recalling the reception arranged by Tukhachevsky with the participation of high-ranking Soviet military leaders, noted that there "was also our friend Uborevich." Tukhachevsky, which is significant, he did not call a friend of Germany. Also, the German General K. Shpalke, who until the beginning of the 30s was a Reichswehr liaison officer with the Red Army, confirms in his memoirs:

"Tukhachevsky, with his aristocratic Polish (rather Lithuanian. B.S.) blood, could be assumed to have much more sympathy for Paris than Berlin, and with all his type he more corresponded to the ideal of an elegant and witty officer of the French General Staff than a respectable German General Staff Officer. He went to a divergence with Germany, was for the war with Germany on the side of the Western powers. "

Interestingly, the letters of Dirksen and Twardowski were intercepted by Soviet agents. So the OGPU was aware of how the Germans really relate to Tukhachevsky.

True, Mikhail Nikolayevich also had to lavish compliments on the Reichswehr. For example, on May 13, 1933, at a reception at Voroshilov's in honor of the German delegation headed by the head of armaments of the German army, General W. von Bockelberg. Then Tukhachevsky reminded the Germans:

"Don't forget that our politics separates us, not our feelings, the feelings of friendship of the Red Army for the Reichswehr. And always think about this:

you and we, Germany and the USSR, can dictate our terms to the whole world if we are together."

And during a visit by the German delegation to the facilities of the Soviet military industry and the aviation school in Kacha (the trip was accompanied by copious libations - during one of the banquets, the German general even fell under the table, sorting through Russian vodka) Tukhachevsky, as Bockelberg's report said,

"at a breakfast in a narrow circle, he repeatedly emphasized that in order for Germany to get out of a difficult political situation, he wishes her, as soon as possible, to have an air fleet of 2000

bomb carriers".

The text of the report became the property of Soviet intelligence, and Voroshilov underlined in three bold strokes in blue pencil the words about 2,000 bombers. However, it is obvious that there was no crime here on the part of Tukhachevsky. And not under the influence of the atmosphere of a friendly feast and alcoholic excesses, Mikhail Nikolaevich, who never got drunk at all, proclaimed toasts to the speedy rearmament of the Reichswehr.

Even before Hitler came to power, the leaders of the Reichswehr decided to gradually abandon the restrictions imposed by the Treaty of Versailles, which they informed Moscow about. As early as July 28, 1932, the adviser to the Soviet embassy in Germany, S. S. Aleksandrovsky, informed the NKID:

"Under strict secrecy, Niedermeier (then chief of German intelligence. B.S.) announced that a military academy banned by the Treaty of Versailles would start working in Berlin in the autumn ... Schleicher (commander of the Reichswehr. - B.S.) is heading for complete destruction completely unprofitable and obsolete forms prescribed to the Reichswehr by Versailles. In practice, this means the abolition of a number of such forms ... In a rather cautious form, Niedermeier made it clear that such a radical reorganization of the army is directed against the West (France) and will be carried out contrary to international prohibitions. "

Soviet leaders seriously hoped that the rearmament of the German army would move primarily against the creators of the Versailles system, and the USSR would be able to remain above the fray for some time in the position of "the third rejoicing." At the same time, they were not mistaken about the love of the Reichswehr for communism. Voroshilov, in one of his letters to the Soviet plenipotentiary in Berlin, L.M. Khinchuk, admitted:

"We never forgot that the Reichswehr is "friends" with us (hating us in the soul) only because of the conditions that have arisen, because of the need to have an "outlet" in the East, to have at least some kind of trump card than to scare Europe. All "friendship" and the cooperation of the Reichswehr went along the line of striving to give us smaller and worse, but to use us as fully as possible.

Exactly the same suspicions were on the German side, only, of course, in relation to the Red Army.

In the first weeks and even months after Hitler came to power, Stalin probably believed that the Nazi regime was fragile, and fed

some hopes that with the help of the Reichswehr it will be possible to remove the Fuhrer, and then form a bloc against England and France with the German "friends". That is why Tukhachevsky told the Reichswehr generals, already after the Reichstag fire and the launch of the anti-communist campaign in Germany, about the possibility of the USSR and the Reich jointly dictating their terms to the rest of the world, that is why he hinted at the need for Germany to "get out of a difficult political situation", meaning not only the shackles of Versailles, but also the rise of the Nazis to power. However, it soon became clear that Hitler's Third Reich - if not for a thousand years, as Hitler dreamed, then at least seriously and for a long time, at least for the next five years. And you will have to fight not together with the Reichswehr, but against the Reichswehr. Therefore, already in the summer of the 33rd, the Soviet Union refused to send its military to the Reichswehr exercises. The German side, in turn, did not send German officers to the Soviet maneuvers.

Neither the USSR nor Germany now wanted to strengthen each other's potential, seeing a potential adversary in a recent partner. And already in the fall, the property of German facilities was evacuated - a tank school near Kazan (Kama object), an aviation school in Lipetsk (Lipetsk object) and, the most secret, an enterprise for the production of chemical warfare agents so kind to Tukhachevsky in the Samara region, on the Volga, near the city of Volsk (object "Tomka"). Soviet-German friendship ended, only to be resurrected for a short time in 1939.

The OGPU was forced to shelve materials about Tukhachevsky's allegedly criminal connections with the German General Staff. While military cooperation with the Reichswehr continued, it was out of hand to change its main actors, who had both experience and top-secret information. Most importantly, the arrest on such a charge of one of the top military leaders could easily compromise mutually beneficial ties with Germany in the military field and even paralyze them. If Germany had the opportunity to train cadres of those branches of the armed forces on Soviet territory that were banned by Versailles, then the USSR gained access to German military technologies and models of weapons and military equipment, and could also borrow the experience of combat training from the Reichswehr, which was head and shoulders above the Red Army in this area. Army.

V. R. Menzhinsky, who replaced Dzerzhinsky, decided to probe Tukhachevsky from the other side. In 1930, during the already mentioned operation "Spring", among about 5 thousand former tsarist officers, teachers of the military academy N. E. Kakurin and I. A. Troitsky, who knew Tukhachevsky well, were arrested. On August 26, 1930, the Chekists obtained compromising evidence against Tukhachevsky from Kakurin. A former colonel in the imperial army reported:

"In Moscow, at times they gathered at Tukhachevsky's, at times at Guy's, at times at the gypsy's. In Leningrad they gathered at Tukhachevsky's. The leader of all these meetings was Tukhachevsky, the participants: I, Kolesinsky, Eijstreicher, Yegorov, Guy, Nikonov, Chusov, Vetlin, Kaufeldt. moment and after the KhUT congress, the decision to sit and wait was clarified, organizing in cadres during the time of the highest tension of the struggle between the rights and the Central Committee. But at the same time Tukhachevsky raised the question of political action as the goal of unleashing the right deviation and moving to a new higher level, which was conceived as a military dictatorship coming to power through a right deviation. On the days of July 7-8 (1930, when Bukharin, Rykov and their supporters were smashed at the congress. - B.S.), meetings and conversations of the above-mentioned persons followed at Tukhachevsky and were made

the last decisive attitudes, i.e., wait, organizing.

Troitsky, in his testimony, also spoke of Tukhachevsky's sympathies for the right deviation.

Under pressure from investigators, Kakurin gave the usual military meetings in an informal setting, at dinner or, on weekends and holidays, at dinner, the character of conspiratorial gatherings, and presented table talk as an organization of a conspiracy to establish a dictatorship in alliance with the right. Farther - more. Nikolai Evgenievich told how Tukhachevsky recruited new conspirators and how popular he is in the army, so that in which case he can move regiments to the Kremlin. True, the unfortunate defendant on the anti-government activities of Tukhachevsky, outside of conversations, could not come up with anything specific.

smog. And the investigators themselves did not yet know Tukhachevsky and his entourage enough to suggest to Kakurin a more or less literate legend. They did not even pay attention to the fact that he did not even name the second "conspirator", Troitsky, among those who gathered at Tukhachevsky.

On September 10, 1930, Menzhinsky sent the protocols of interrogations of Kakurin and Troitsky to Stalin, accompanying them with the following letter: "I reported this case to Comrade Molotov and asked for permission to stick to the version that Kakurin and Troitsky were arrested in a spy case until I received your instructions. To arrest the members of the group one by one - risky. There can be two ways out: either immediately arrest the most active members of the group, or wait for your arrival, taking undercover measures so as not to be taken by surprise. I consider it necessary to note that now all rebel groups are maturing very quickly and the last decision presents a certain risk. "

However, Vyacheslav Rudolfovich failed to scare Joseph Vissarionovich, who was resting in Sochi. On September 24, Stalin wrote to Ordzhonikidze:

"Read the testimony of Kakurin-Troitsky as soon as possible and think about measures to eliminate this unpleasant matter. This material, as you can see, is strictly secret: Molotov knows about it, I, and now you will know about it. I don't know if Klim knows about it. "It follows that Tukhachevsky was captured by anti-Soviet elements and was also strictly indoctrinated by anti-Soviet elements from the ranks of the Right. So it appears from the materials. Is this possible? Of course, it is possible, since it is not ruled out. Apparently, the Right is ready to go even to a military dictatorship, only to get rid of the Central Committee, of the collective farms and state farms, of the Bolshevik pace of industrial development ... Well, that's it ... It's impossible to put an end to this matter in the usual way (immediate arrest, etc.). the question posed in Menzhinsky's note until mid-October, when we are all assembled. Talk about all this with Molotov when you are in Moscow."

Menzhinsky wanted to help Stalin connect Bukharin and his comrades with a military conspiracy so that they could immediately be put in the dock. But the leader of the "gift" did not accept. The time has not yet come. Of course, Stalin, no worse than the chief of the OGPU, knew that there was no conspiracy at all, that a dozen military men, and even in the majority, were teachers of academies or, like Tukhachevsky, although they were commanders

the troops of the district, but not the capital, will not be able to carry out a military coup with all their desire. That for such a coup it is necessary to involve in the conspiracy many combat commanders, up to the regimental level, and with such a scope of activity of the conspirators, it cannot go unnoticed by the agents of the OGPU and the army political agencies. There are no reports about the grassroots cells of the conspiracy in Menzhinsky's materials. And for a palace coup, it is necessary to have on your side the Kremlin guards, consisting of Chekists, and not of the military, and Tukhachevsky and his comrades are not controlled from any side. So, about the conspiracy - everything is pure linden water. That is why Stalin sent the protocols to Ordzhonikidze, being aware of his friendship with Tukhachevsky. And he directly asked not to hurry with the analysis of the case, to postpone it for almost a month. Iosif Vissarionovich wanted to receive for the future

a trump card against both Tukhachevsky and "dear friend" Sergo.

At that moment, Stalin was not going to arrest either Bukharin or Tukhachevsky. Too early. Tukhachevsky is needed for the reorganization of the Red Army. But Bukharin still has supporters in the party. We must slowly subtract them, and then the elimination of the "party favorite" "Bukharchik" will not particularly alarm anyone. But for the future, the "great leader and teacher" made a reservation: "Of course, it is possible, since it is not excluded." It seems that he trusts Ordzhonikidze - "the material is top secret", only I, Molotov and you know, so justify the trust. Stalin understood that Ordzhonikidze would not believe in his friend's treachery and would work for him. Now this is only beneficial - after all, in reality, Joseph Vissarionovich at that moment was not going to put Tukhachevsky against the wall. But when the time comes, this letter will make it possible to accuse "dear friend" Sergo of political myopia: after all, Stalin warned him about Tukhachevsky, but Grigory Konstantinovich, out of the kindness of his soul, did not believe it.

Meanwhile, on October 5, new testimony was beaten out of Kakurin. Finally broken by pain said:

"Mikhail Nikolayevich said that ... one can count on a further aggravation of the intra-Party struggle. I do not exclude the possibility, he said, as one of the prospects, that in the heat and bitterness of this struggle, passions, both political and personal, flare up so much that all frames and boundaries will be forgotten and crossed. It is also possible that the hand of a fanatic to unleash the right deviation will not stop even before an attempt on the life of Comrade Stalin himself ... Mikhail Nikolayevich, perhaps, has some kind of connection with Uglanov and, perhaps with a number of other party or near-party persons who consider "Tukhachevsky as a possible military leader in the event of a fight against anarchy and aggression. Now, when I have had time to think deeply about everything that happened, I will not rule out the possibility that, speaking as a forecast about a fanatic shooting at Stalin, Tukhachevsky simply veiled the perspective that he himself was thinking about in reality.

Menzhinsky and his comrades sewed Tukhachevsky a firing case: intent on a terrorist attack, and not on anyone, but on Stalin himself, not knowing that the leader had already made a decision: do not touch Tukhachevsky yet. Mikhail Nikolaevich was given a confrontation with Kakurin and Troitsky. Later, after the arrest of Tukhachevsky, Stalin, speaking at a meeting of the Military Council on June 2, 1937, recalled:

"We turned to Comrade Dubovoy, Yakir and Gamarnik. Is it right that Tukhachevsky should be arrested as an enemy. All three said no, this must be some kind of misunderstanding, wrong ... We made a confrontation and decided to cross out this case Now it turns out that the two military men who pointed at Tukhachevsky were pointing correctly ... "

Kakurin died in prison back in 1936, and Troitsky, despite "truthful testimony", was safely shot in 1939. The fate of the military leaders who vouched for Tukhachevsky was no better. Ya. B. Gamarnik was lucky enough to shoot himself and thereby avoid a shameful trial and execution. I. E. Yakir was shot together with Tukhachevsky, and I. N. Dubovoy a little later, in the 38th. Truly, no good deed goes unpunished...

Material on Tukhachevsky, as well as on other leaders

Red Army, continued to save. It will come in handy ... The ubiquitous Zayonchkovskaya, by the way, Kakurina's cousin, tried. With reference to the same Gerbing, in 1934 she informed about an alleged conspiracy of the military planning an assassination attempt on Stalin. Gerbing allegedly told her:

"What are the Bolsheviks for the Russian army? They are not enemies, but the one who is not an enemy is already essentially not a Bolshevik. Tukhachevsky is not a Bolshevik, he never was, Uborevich too, Kamenev too. Not a Bolshevik and Budyonny. But their choice ... fell on Tukhachevsky."

Perhaps, after the termination of cooperation with the USSR, German intelligence was disappointed in Uborevich's Germanophilism and decided to spread rumors that compromised him along with Tukhachevsky. However, Stalin has so far not responded to signals about the military elite. And one of the leaders of the NKVD, the head of the Special Department M.I. Gai, on the report of Zayonchkovskaya, where she accused not only Tukhachevsky, but also Putna, Kork, Eideman, Feldman, Sergeev and others of treason, imposed an eloquent resolution: "This is sheer nonsense an old woman out of her mind. Summon her to me."

Meanwhile, the "old woman out of her mind" successfully survived not only the military men slandered by her, but also Guy himself, who disappeared in the abyss of repression. Even during the Khrushchev thaw, Tatyana Andreevna, like other seksots, was not punished for denunciations.

Only in the second half of 1936, Stalin decided that the time had come to take on Tukhachevsky and his associates. Lydia Nord thought the controversy over the war in Spain was the impetus. Modern historians, in particular N. A. Zenkovich, point to a quarrel during a banquet after the parade on May 1, 1936 as an immediate reason. Then, after a fair dose of strong drinks, Voroshilov, Budyonny and Tukhachevsky argued about the affairs of old: who was responsible for the defeat near Warsaw, and then very soon switched to the present. Tukhachevsky accused the former Cavalry leaders of placing Cavalry commanders personally devoted to them in responsible positions and creating their own group in the Red Army. Voroshilov threw out irritably: "Don't they group around you?"

About what happened at the banquet, and then at the Politburo, Voroshilov spoke at the beginning of June 37th at an expanded meeting of the Military

Council, entirely dedicated to the "counter-revolutionary conspiracy in the Red Army":

"Last year, in the month of May, in my apartment, Tukhachevsky accused me and Budyonny, in the presence of Comrade Comrade Stalin, Molotov and many others, that I supposedly group a small group of people around me, I lead them, directing all policy, etc. Then, on the second day, Tukhachevsky retracted everything he had said... Comrade Stalin then said that we should stop squabbling in private, that we should arrange a meeting of the Politburo and at that meeting discuss in detail what was the matter. At this meeting, we analyzed all these issues and again came to the same result. Here Stalin retorted: "He retracted his accusations." "Yes," Voroshilov repeated, "he refused, although the group of Yakir and Uborevich behaved rather aggressively towards me at the meeting. Uborevich was still silent, and Gamarnik and Yakir behaved very badly towards me."

It turned out that Tukhachevsky himself hastened his end. Later,

during the investigation and trial, he and other conspirators admitted that they wanted to remove Voroshilov from the post of people's commissar of defense. Tukhachevsky was predicted to be his successor, although during the investigation Primakov spoke of Yakir as a candidate for people's commissar, since he was allegedly close to Trotsky. So the scandal at the May Day banquet broke out for a reason. Uborevich confirmed in court:

"We went to the government to raise the question of Voroshilov, to attack Voroshilov, in essence we agreed with Gamarnik, who said that he would strongly oppose Voroshilov."

Of Tukhachevsky's like-minded people, only the head of the Political Directorate of the Red Army, Gamarnik, and the commander of the Kyiv military district, Yakir, were full members of the Central Committee. Therefore, it is quite understandable that it was Gamarnik, the second person in the military hierarchy, the head of all army political workers, who was entrusted with the main role in criticizing Voroshilov at the Politburo.

The intention to remove Voroshilov was regarded by the Special Judicial Presence as nothing less than an intent to commit a terrorist attack. Although during the investigation Primakov testified that he had conversations with his friends,

"carrying the character of a Trotskyist slander against Voroshilov, but there were no terrorist talks. There were talks that the Central Committee itself would see Voroshilov's unsuitability ...".

In the future, however, with reference to N. V. Kuibyshev, Vitaly Markovich expressed himself even sharper about the people's commissar:

"Kuibyshev told me that Voroshilov, apart from shooting from a revolver, is not interested in anything. He needs either lackeys like Khmel'nitsky (a long-term Voroshilov adjutant in the rank of general. - B.S.), or fools like Kulik, or old people who agree on everything like Shaposhnikov: Voroshilov does not understand the modern army, he does not understand the significance of technology..."

There is no doubt that Kliment Efremovich Tukhachevsky also evaluated Kliment Efremovich.

Well, disagreements and even squabbles in the military department are in

various countries of the world, including democratic ones. It can be assumed, for example, that in England the chief of the imperial general staff will turn to the prime minister with a request to dismiss the minister of defense, who, say, turned out to be a useless administrator and with whom it is therefore impossible to work. And the scenario for resolving such a situation is also quite predictable. Even if the general turned out to be completely right and the civilian minister is clearly out of place, the chief of staff will almost certainly be dismissed, albeit an honorary one, with a full pension and the right to wear a uniform. And they will do so in order to observe one of the fundamental principles of a democratic state: non-intervention of the military in politics. But, curiously, dictators (of course, if we are not talking about military dictatorships) profess the same principle, seeing the political activity of the army as a threat to their dominance. Both Hitler and Stalin adhered to it sacredly. The latter was sure that Tukhachevsky, Gamarnik and others would continue their intrigue against Voroshilov and, if the opportunity arose, would once again raise the question of his resignation before the Politburo. Stalin could not allow this. Today, the military leaders indicate to him, albeit only in a mild, pleading form (most likely, at the May meeting Gamarnik did not even directly question the removal of Voroshilov

put it - otherwise it would have been reflected in the materials of the investigation and the court). Tomorrow they may require changes in foreign policy or domestic policy. At that moment, Stalin was not going to refuse the services of the devoted Klim. To remove Voroshilov from the post of people's commissar, catastrophic setbacks in the war with Finland were required, when his incompetence was revealed with his own eyes. The "First Marshal" was replaced by another cavalryman, S.K. Timoshenko, for the breakthrough of the Mannerheim line, which cost huge sacrifices, was declared the winner of the Finns. Iosif Vissarionovich considered dismissing Marshal Tukhachevsky, army commissar 1st rank Gamarnik, commanders 1st rank Uborevich and Yakir and other representatives of the anti-Voroshilov group in high ranks not only unnecessary, but also dangerous. Some kind of popularity in the army among the disgraced leaders will remain, in their resignation they will blame not only Voroshilov, but first of all him, Stalin. And who knows whether in the event of a crisis, someone from the Politburo or the commanders remaining in the army - their supporters - will turn to the services of the same Tukhachevsky or Yakir? It is safer not to fire, but to arrest, defame and shoot. No person - no problem. And since the appointments of all senior command staff and political workers were made with the consent, and sometimes on the direct recommendation of Tukhachevsky, Gamarnik, Uborevich, Yakir, and the main department of the commanding staff was headed by Tukhachevsky's closest friend Feldman for several years, almost all commanders, commissars automatically fell under suspicion, commanders, commanders, brigade commanders and so on - up to regimental commanders. An exception was made only for representatives of the "cavalry group", as well as some military leaders who did not belong to it, but whose loyalty Stalin did not doubt. These latter included, in particular, the "old man who agrees to everything" B. M. Shaposhnikov, whose advice the leader carefully listened to and called the only one from the military by name and patronymic - not "comrade Shaposhnikov", but "Boris Mikhailovich".

The outbreak of war in Spain, in which Germany and Italy were actively involved from the very beginning, was obviously regarded by Stalin as a harbinger of a new world war, on the eve of which it was necessary to clear the Red Army of

unreliable (or seemingly unreliable) commanding and political cadres. In addition, the size of the armed forces was planned to be increased several times, and this required many new commanders, commanders and commanders, several times more than it was in the 37th. So the elimination of those who advanced through the ranks of the military hierarchy during the time of Tukhachevsky and Gamarnik, or, even worse, under Trotsky, did not fundamentally change the position in the army, as Stalin believed. You just have to slightly increase the output of military academies and schools. There are no irreplaceable people. On the other hand, the new commanders and commissars of districts, armies, corps and divisions, mindful of the fate of their predecessors, will forget about any opposition, especially about the opposition of the party and personally to the general secretary. As a result, until the beginning of World War II, three out of five marshals who held this high rank in 1937, both army commissars of the 1st rank, all 5 commanders of the 1st rank and all 12 commanders of the 2nd rank, as well as all 6 flagships of the fleet of the 1st rank and 2 flagships of the 2nd rank, as well as all 15

army commissars of the 2nd rank. Corps commanders, division commanders and brigade commanders were almost completely destroyed: 60 out of 67 commanders suffered, 25 out of 28 corps commissars, 136 out of 199 division commanders, 79 out of 97 divisional commissars, 221 out of 397 brigade commanders and 34 out of 36 brigade commissars. Almost half of the regimental commanders were also repressed.

The war in Spain probably prompted Stalin to begin preparations for removing Tukhachevsky and his team from the scene. However, this process itself dragged on for almost a year. In August 1936, as I have already said, Primakov and Putna were arrested. Tukhachevsky did not yet feel the danger. But a few months later, at the plenum of the Central Committee in February - March of the 37th, he should have been worried. Voroshilov spoke there and said:

"Unfortunately, not so many enemies have been revealed in the army so far. I say - fortunately, hoping that there are few enemies in the Red Army at all. This is how it should be, because the party sends its best cadres to the army; the country singles out the most healthy and strong people.

But he immediately stated:

"Of course, I am far from the idea that everything is going well in the army everywhere and everything is going well. No, it is not at all excluded that vile enemies have penetrated into the army in much greater numbers than we currently know about it."

The People's Commissar of Defense told which enemies the NKVD had already identified in the Red Army:

"For the most part, these are the highest command personnel, these are people who held high command posts. In addition to this, a relatively small group, separate, small groups of pests from the environment of the senior and lower command personnel in various levels of the military apparatus have also been uncovered."

It turned out that in the mass, if you count the rank and file of the Red Army and the junior command staff, the Red Army is unconditionally devoted to the party and Stalin. There are no traitors among strong and healthy conscripts (in fact, not very healthy ones, as we saw from the examples given by Tukhachevsky: in height and weight, the Red Army soldiers were significantly inferior to the soldiers of the "bourgeois armies"). They are not among the brave commanders of platoons, companies, and even, perhaps, battalions. But the above picture, perhaps not so blissful. Among the much less numerous stratum of commanders of divisions, corps, and even, scary to say, of entire military districts, the enemies are quite likely to

nestled in earnest and not today or tomorrow they can inflict a dastardly blow in the back of the Workers 'and Peasants' Red Army. So, they need to be identified and neutralized as soon as possible. What warm feelings Voroshilov has for him, Tukhachevsky knew very well and understood among whom Kliment Efremovich would begin to look for "enemies of the people." The People's Commissar, meanwhile, delved into the past, referring to the times when Trotsky in the early 1920s, in the factional struggle, "tried to rely on army cadres":

"At this stage of his enemy attack against the party and Lenin, Trotsky was beaten. But he did not lay down his arms, but carried out in-depth subversive work. Army. In 1923-1924, the Trotskyists had behind them, as you remember, this should be remembered, almost the entire Moscow garrison. Almost the entire military academy, the school in the Central Executive Committee, the artillery school, as well as most other parts of the Moscow garrison were then for Trotsky " .

"And the headquarters of the Moscow district, where Muralov was sitting, was for Trotsky," Gamarnik agreed to Voroshilov, apparently still unaware that very soon he himself would be on the list of enemies of the people. And when the drug addict

called the arrested commanders Primakov and Putna "the most prominent representatives of the old Trotskyite cadres", and about the commander S. A. Turovsky arrested with them, he said that he, "not being a Trotskyist in the past, nevertheless, despite the denial of his guilt so far, it is obvious , in a hidden form, is also a member of the Trotskyist gang, "Tukhachevsky must have calmed down. He hoped that Vitaly Markovich and Vitovt Kazimirovich were taken for old sins - support for the Trotskyist opposition, and not at all as people close to him, Tukhachevsky. After all, Mikhail Nikolayevich Trotsky himself, as well as the group of Bukharin and Rykov, never supported, which he later spoke about during the investigation and stated at the trial:

"I always spoke out against Trotsky in all cases, when there was a discussion, in the same way I spoke out against the right ... So I did not stand on the right positions ... As for my speech against Trotsky in 1923, I personally wrote a report On this occasion, he was sent to the Central Committee.

None of the investigators or judges of the report, undermining the accusations against Tukhachevsky of Trotskyism, began to look. Its text has not yet been found. But then, at the plenum, the marshal could not dream of the future quick and wrong trial even in a nightmare.

Voroshilov, meanwhile, began to present the testimony of the arrested, and Mikhail Nikolayevich became alert again.

"Neither Primakov nor Turovsky have yet admitted their guilt, although there is a huge amount of evidence about their criminal activities. The most they confess is that they did not like Voroshilov and Budyonny, and himself to sharply criticize both me and Budyonny. Primakov says that he saw us as competitors, he is a cavalryman, and Budyonny and I are also cavalrymen."

Here, those present laughed together, not yet knowing that many of them would soon have to find themselves in the same place as Primakov, and share the fate of the legendary leader of the Red Cossacks. Don't know,

Did Tukhachevsky laugh? I think not, although it was risky: they could be suspected either of sympathy for the arrested commander, or of the presence of the first deputy people's commissar of defense of sins worse than Primakov's. Voroshilov's words must have led Tukhachevsky to sad thoughts. After all, he also allowed himself to publicly, in the presence of the leaders of the party and state, criticize Kliment Efremovich and Semyon Mikhailovich, and not only before the 33rd, but also quite recently, less than a year had passed. And Voroshilov told me that Putna and another arrested man, divisional commander D. A. Schmidt, were preparing an assassination attempt on him, as Turovsky was preparing the same attempt ... Tukhachevsky hardly believed this, but he understood: the investigators were talking against Voroshilov without much effort turn it into an intention to kill the people's commissar of defense ...

A month passed after the completion of the Plenum, without introducing anything disturbing into the life of Tukhachevsky. Thunder struck only in the second half of April, and now the lightning was directed directly at Mikhail Nikolayevich. Tukhachevsky and his wife were going to London for the coronation of King George VI. And suddenly the trip is cancelled. On April 21, 1937, People's Commissar of Internal Affairs N. I. Yezhov sent a special message to Stalin, Molotov and Voroshilov:

"Today we have received information from a foreign source that deserves complete trust that during Comrade Tukhachevsky's trip to the coronation celebrations in London, it is planned to commit a terrorist act on him on the instructions of German intelligence agencies. A group of 4 people has been created to prepare a terrorist act (3 Germans and 1 Pole). The source does not exclude that the terrorist act is being prepared with the intention of causing an international complication. In view of the fact that we are unable to provide security for Comrade Tukhachevsky along the way and in London, which guarantees his complete safety, I consider it expedient for Comrade Tukhachevsky to travel. Tukhachevsky to London to cancel. Please discuss."

On this paper, Stalin wrote:

"Members of the Politburo. Sadly, we have to agree with Comrade Yezhov's proposal. We must invite Comrade Voroshilov to present another candidate."

The Politburo meekly agreed with the leader and the next day decided to cancel Tukhachevsky's trip. Instead, the flagship of the fleet of the 1st rank, V. M. Orlov, head of the naval forces of the Red Army and deputy people's commissar of defense, went to London (he was shot a year later than Tukhachevsky, on July 28, 1938). On April 23, Mikhail Nikolayevich was acquainted with the text of the special message, Stalin's resolution and the decision of the Politburo. What must he have thought? On the one hand, Tukhachevsky's publications with sharp criticism of the remilitarization of Germany were widely known and earned him hatred in Berlin. So, in principle, it could not be ruled out that the Germans were going to physically destroy one of the leaders of the Red Army who was considered the most anti-German. However, the proviso in Yezhov's note that a terrorist attack might be being prepared to provoke international complications changed the essence of the matter. In this case, it would be practically all the same to those who attempted to kill which of Voroshilov's deputies to kill Tukhachevsky or Orlov. The NKVD in the same way could not guarantee one hundred percent security to the head of the naval forces, but for some reason they risked sending him to Foggy Albion. Therefore,

the marshal, for sure, a suspicion arose that for some reason they did not want to let him go abroad. Either they are afraid that they will become a defector, or they are secretly preparing reprisals and do not want the future "enemy of the people" to represent the Soviet Union at the celebrations.

And Tukhachevsky felt very bad on May 1, 1937 at a traditional banquet in Voroshilov's apartment. This banquet was recalled by the former head of the intelligence department of the Red Army, commander S. P. Uritsky. I recalled under very sad circumstances for myself. Removed from his post and arrested, Semyon Petrovich wrote a letter to the People's Commissar of Defense, trying to assure Voroshilov of his innocence (it did not help - in 1938 Uritsky was shot). This letter stated, in part:

"... On May 1, 1937, after the parade in your apartment, the leader said that the enemies would be exposed, the party would grind them to powder, and raised a toast to those who, remaining faithful, would worthily take their place at the glorious table on the October anniversary" .

In Stalin's words there was an unequivocal hint that not all of those present would again be at this table on November 7 of that year. Tukhachevsky could well bear this allusion to himself.

The first direct blow to Tukhachevsky followed on 10 May. It was a knockdown. The marshal, to use boxing terminology, "floated", fell into a state of "grogs". The Politburo accepted Voroshilov's proposal to relieve Tukhachevsky of his duties as First Deputy People's Commissar of Defense and appoint him commander of the secondary Volga Military District. By the same decree, Yakir was transferred from the Kyiv district to the Leningrad district and thereby lost his seat in the Politburo of the Communist Party of Ukraine (this subsequently facilitated the procedure for his arrest). Army Commander 1st Rank Shaposhnikov became Chief of the General Staff, and Marshal Egorov became First Deputy People's Commissar. On May 13, Tukhachevsky obtained an appointment with Stalin. What they were talking about is unknown. But some information, as a marshal, explained the reasons for his disgrace, there is. Kulyabko's old friend, who lived to see rehabilitation, testified to the party commission that when he found out about Tukhachevsky's appointment to the Volga district, he rushed to his apartment. The marshal explained that "the reason for his transfer to Kuibyshev, as reported by the Central Committee of the party, is the fact that his friend Kuzmina and a former guarantor turned out to be spies and were arrested." Similarly, Lydia Nord says that the reason for the removal of her son-in-law was his connections with women. She conveys Tukhachevsky's conversation with Gamarnik, and also describes the depressed state of the marshal (most likely, having learned about the low honor exile in Kuibyshev, Mikhail Nikolayevich went to his closest friend Feldman, who in April 37 was appointed deputy commander of the Moscow Military District, and, perhaps, he wrote letters to high authorities):

"The removal of Tukhachevsky ... stunned not only the employees of the People's Commissariat of Defense and the General Staff, but the entire army. Tukhachevsky took it as a slap in the face. Immediately haggard, constantly pulling at the collar of his tunic that was strangling him, he sat and wrote letters - to Voroshilov, to the Central Committee of the party and

but it was to connect with Yagoda and the right. In this direction, the NKVD bodies were developing Tukhachevsky. On the 20th of April there were

testimonies were received from the arrested former head of the Special Department of the NKVD Guy and the former deputy people's commissar of internal affairs Prokofiev about the conspiracy of Tukhachevsky, Uborevich, Kork, Shaposhnikov and other military leaders with Yagoda. However, Heinrich Grigoryevich himself has not yet confirmed this. During interrogation on April 26, 1937, he insisted: "I had no personal connections in the literal sense of the word among the military. I had official acquaintances. I did not try to recruit any of them." More accommodating was one of Yagoda's subordinates, the former deputy head of one of the departments of the NKVD Volovich. The next day, he testified that Tukhachevsky was a member of the right-wing conspiracy and was supposed to ensure that the conspirators were supported by the army.

Heading to Kuibyshev, Mikhail Nikolayevich, of course, did not yet know anything about these formidable accusations. According to Lydia Nord, Voroshilov received him before leaving. During their conversation, the head of the Special Department of the Moscow Military District was allegedly present.

"When I thanked Kliment Efremovich for" trusting me "he was white as a wall, and completely confused. I gathered all my strength so as not to break loose, but still left them with very sour faces,"

- Mikhail Nikolaevich told his family. Obviously, the people's commissar already knew that Tukhachevsky had very little time left to live, and he felt that he was talking with a living corpse - hence the horror that seized Voroshilov. Some friends began to turn away from the disgraced marshal. So, Lydia Nord assures that Eideman refused to meet with Tukhachevsky, who said: "The Politburo knows what it is doing. Without good reasons, Tukhachevsky would not have been removed."

Mikhail Nikolayevich himself did not yet understand his doom. Some kind of vague hope that over time everything will work out and he will return to Moscow to his previous position, nevertheless glimmered. Tukhachevsky arrived in Kuibyshev on May 14. His arrival was remembered by Lieutenant General P. A. Yermolin, who at that time was the chief of staff of one of the corps in the Volga district, and who had previously known Mikhail Nikolayevich from the military academy in Moscow. Shortly after arriving in Kuibyshev, Tukhachevsky went to the district party conference. Yermolin recalled:

"On the very first day of the conference, a rumor spread: a new commander of the troops, M. N. Tukhachevsky, was arriving in the district, and P. E. Dybenko was sent to Leningrad. This seemed strange, unlikely. at the head of his deputy people's commissar, the illustrious marshal. But at the same time, many commanders expressed satisfaction. It was pleasant to serve under M. N. Tukhachevsky.

At the evening session of the conference, Mikhail Nikolayevich appeared in the presidium... He was greeted with applause. However, there was some uneasiness in the hall. Someone even shouted out: "Let him explain why he was removed from the deputy commissar!" During the break, Tukhachevsky came up to me. He asked where I serve, how long ago I left the academy. Unusually, he smiled meekly: "I'm glad that we will work together. After all, old acquaintances ..." It was felt that Mikhail Nikolayevich was not at ease. Sitting not far from him at the presidium table, I stealthily peered at him. Whiskey turned gray, eyes swollen. Sometimes he lowered his eyelids, as if from a cutting light. Head down, fingers

involuntarily sort out pencils lying on the tablecloth.

I happened to observe Tukhachevsky in various circumstances. Including in the bitter days of the Warsaw retreat. But I have never seen him like this. The next morning, he again sat in the presidium of the party conference, and at the evening meeting he was supposed to make a speech. We have been waiting for this speech with impatience and interest. But they didn't wait for her. Tukhachevsky did not reappear."

Yes, the catastrophe that occurred was worse than the one near Warsaw. Then, in the 20th, Mikhail Nikolaevich, rightly or not, he placed all the responsibility for what had happened on others - the leadership of the Southwestern Front and the Cavalry, and even on the commander in chief, who could not force Yegorov, Stalin, Budyonny and Voroshilov to obey him, Tukhachevsky, orders. The young commander of the Western Front hoped that his career would not be interrupted due to failure on the Vistula, and he was not mistaken. Now, in May 1937, the disgraced military leader knew in his heart that his career was over. At best, they will hold them until retirement age in unimportant positions and then quietly retire (dismissing the youngest, 44-year-old marshal at that moment, would be scandalous in itself). I didn't even want the worst

think. And then he received the most unpleasant news. It shocked Tukhachevsky. Tells Lieutenant General Ya. TsP. Zenit, who knew Mikhail Nikolaevich from his work in Moscow:

"The last time I met with Tukhachevsky was in the spring of 1937, when he, as commander of the Volga Military District, arrived in Kuibyshev. After a meeting with the commanders of the formations, Mikhail Nikolayevich asked me to linger and, when everyone left, he offered me the post of chief of staff of the district. The offer was flattering, but I sincerely said that I would prefer to remain in the position of division commander for the time being. Mikhail Nikolayevich treated me with understanding and, it seems, was ready to say goodbye. But at that time, a telephone call suddenly rang out from Moscow, and I became an unwitting witness to a very difficult scene. It did not escape my attention that, while talking with Moscow, Tukhachevsky became more and more gloomy. Hanging up the phone, he was silent for several minutes. Then he admitted that he had received bad news: the head of the Main Directorate of Personnel had been arrested (in fact, at that moment - already the deputy commander Moscow Military District - BS) Feldman "Some kind of grandiose provocation!" Mikhail Nikolayevich said with pain. This was our last meeting. Soon I learned about the arrest of Tukhachevsky himself.

Refusing the flattering offer of the disgraced marshal, Yan Petrovich showed enviable foresight. If Zenith had agreed to go to Tukhachevsky as the chief of staff, he would certainly have been shot, if not with him, then soon after. And so the repressions bypassed the wise divisional commander.

Feldman was arrested on May 15, 1937. Probably, the dramatic telephone conversation took place that same evening or the next day, Tukhachevsky's friends should have learned about Feldman's disappearance very quickly. True, it is possible that the sad news overtook Mikhail Nikolayevich a little later - this is if at the time of the arrest of his closest friend he was on his way to Kuibyshev. The marshal had to realize that after Feldman, the line was behind him. After all, he shared the most intimate with Boris Mironovich ... It is no coincidence

the authors of later publications about Tukhachevsky, in particular the French journalist Viktor Alexandrov, make our hero talk with Feldman about the possibility of a military coup. Let us cite the version of their conversation, which is reproduced in the book of Russian historians V. N. Rapoport and Yu. A. Geller "Treason to the Motherland". Of course, here we are dealing with rumors that circulated in Soviet military and journalistic circles. But who knows if there is a particle of truth in these rumors. After all, such a conversation could take place, say, at the moment when the marshal found out that he was no longer the first deputy people's commissar of defense. So,

Feldman: "Don't you see where things are going? He will kill us all one by one, like chickens. We must act."

Tukhachevsky: "Go, what are you suggesting - this is a coup d'état. I will not go for it."

In any case, further than conversations, and even then, most likely, after an extra glass of vodka or cognac (Feldman's widow claims that in the last months of his life the marshal consumed cognac more than usual), preparations for the coup could not move in principle. In 1937, both Tukhachevsky, and Feldman, and other military men understood perfectly well that

military coup in the USSR is impossible. To prepare it, many months of work are needed to involve combat commanders of at least the Moscow garrison in the conspiracy, which would not escape the attention of political agencies, special departments and secret informants. And with what slogans could one raise the red commanders, and even ordinary soldiers, to overthrow Stalin? The cult of the leader has already developed very strongly. For at least a whole decade, no public criticism of the General Secretary was allowed. The Red Army soldiers knew about the horrors of collectivization, but believed that they were already in the past and that the "dashing boyars" in the localities were responsible for them, and not the "good tsar" - Stalin. Yes, and financially the military, not excluding ordinary soldiers, lived, as we had previously seen, much easier than the rest of the country's population.

The few surviving supporters of Trotsky, after the death of their leader and the death of Stalin, told that military leaders loyal to Lev Davidovich, such as N. I. Muralov, commander of the troops of the Moscow Military District, shortly after Lenin's death, proposed to carry out a military coup, arrest Stalin, G. E. Zinoviev, L. B. Kamenev and other members of the Politburo as traitors to the revolution and proclaim Trotsky the head of the party and state. The chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council rejected this idea. Although he had all the possibilities for a successful coup. After all, he controlled the apparatus of the military department and was popular among the troops, where there were many military leaders loyal to Trotsky. The OGPU in the mid-20s did not yet have such a developed network of its bodies in the Red Army as in the 30s, and these bodies themselves were to some extent forced to reckon with the Revolutionary Military Council in their activities. Trotsky's influence in the army at that time was forced to admit, as we remember, even Voroshilov at the February-March plenum of 1937. But the role of an ordinary military dictator in the manner of the South American chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council did not suit him. He dreamed of a world socialist revolution. The fact that its export on the bayonets of the Red Army is impossible, Lev Davidovich was convinced during the war with Poland. This means that it was necessary to establish their power in the Bolshevik Party - the bearer of the ideas of Marx and Lenin that are attractive to the proletariat and the wider masses of the people throughout the world.

A military coup reduced the party to the secondary role of an appendage of the army, and at the same time, as Trotsky believed, it would also destroy the chances for the triumph of the world proletariat. That is why Lev Davidovich entered into a hopeless struggle to win over the majority of party members to his side, for leadership in the CPSU (6).

Tukhachevsky, in the 37th, had neither the opportunity to fight, nor an idea worth fighting for. His whole life was devoted to the Red Army, in which, perhaps, he simultaneously saw both a strong Russian national army and an instrument of struggle for the victory of the world revolution, unlike Trotsky, continuing to believe in the success of the export of communism by military means. With the move to the provincial Volga district, the marshal was actually removed from the leadership of the transformation of the Red Army into a powerful military force that, as he wanted to believe, would meet all the requirements of a future war. Tukhachevsky's main idea could no longer be realized. All that remained was to console himself with an ever-waning hope: what if Stalin would change his anger to mercy and return him to Moscow? But after Feldman's arrest, the marshal's ingenuity should have prompted: we are talking about freedom and life itself.

Many years later, in 1962, in the same Kuibyshev, a note was handed over to Chief Marshal of Artillery S. S. Varentsov during military training: "Penkovsky was arrested as an American spy." A little explanation is needed here. Colonel of the Main Intelligence Directorate of the General Staff O. V. Penkovsky, the closest friend of the marshal, to whom Sergei Sergeevich said: "You are like a son to me," for two years was the most valuable intelligence agent of the United States and England. After reading the note, the marshal's ingenuity did not fail: Varentsov collapsed into a swoon. True, for quite real sins (he divulged to Penkovsky information to which he had no access due to his position), he got off much easier than Tukhachevsky, who was not guilty of any espionage or conspiracy. Varentsov was deprived of the Gold Star of the Hero of the Soviet Union and demoted to major general, at the same time being expelled from the party and dismissed.

Once Tukhachevsky liberated Samara, the future Kuibyshev, from the Whites. The irony of fate was that in the same city, named after his friend, Mikhail Nikolayevich had to spend his last days at large. After Mikhail Nikolaevich found out about Feldman's arrest, the marshal's ingenuity, it seems, should have suggested two possible courses of action. The first, the simplest: put a bullet in the forehead, preferring death worthy of a military leader to the shame of trial and execution. The second, more difficult one: to try to escape from Kuibyshev, go underground and reach some border - Manchurian, Polish, Romanian, Iranian, it doesn't matter. In case of failure: see option one. But Tukhachevsky did not take any action at all in the days remaining before his arrest. Why? Of all those who were involved in the case of the "military-fascist conspiracy", he found the strength to commit suicide, choosing an honest officer's death instead of the humiliation of the inquisition process, only Gamarnik, who before the revolution was not an officer at all, but a half-educated student of the law faculty .. Lydia Nord gives a version, according to which Yan Borisovich refused to endorse the order for the arrest of Tukhachevsky, and when, after an hour or two, they came for him, he shot himself. The documents of the party archives paint a picture of Gamarnik's suicide somewhat differently. Tukhachevsky was arrested on May 22, and on May 25-26, by questioning members and candidate members of the Central Committee, a decision was made to expel him from the party. Gamarnik was sick at that time,

was at home and did not take part in voting on this and subsequent resolutions. On May 28, immediately upon arrival in Moscow, Yakir was arrested, and the next day in Vyazma, the same fate befell Uborevich, who did not have time to reach the capital. In the period from May 30 to June 1, the Central Committee expelled both from the party by questioning and removed them respectively from full members and candidate members of the Central Committee. And then, on May 30, the Politburo made a decision: "To remove comrades Gamarnik and Aronshtam from work in the People's Commissariat of Defense and to exclude from the Military Council, as employees who were in close group communication with Yakir, now expelled from the party for participation in the military fascist conspiracy. The next day, on the orders of Voroshilov, Deputy Head of the Political Directorate A.S. Bulin (shot a year later) and Head of the Department of Affairs of the People's Commissariat of Defense I.V. Smorodinov (he was lucky enough to survive) came to Gamarnik to announce to Yan Borisovich the order to dismiss from the Red Army.

Gamarnik shot himself immediately after they left, not waiting for the inevitable arrest. What prevented Tukhachevsky from doing the same after the news of Feldman's arrest?

Lidia Nord herself composes or transmits from hearsay a completely legendary version that the NKVD officers, back in Moscow, convinced the marshal's wife to replace her husband's revolver with blank live cartridges so that he would not shoot himself from the shock caused by the humiliating transfer to Kuibyshev. You might think that Mikhail Nikolayevich never once checked his weapons in his new place or could not find at least one live cartridge in the headquarters of the Volga District in order to take his own life. It is more likely that something else stopped him: in the depths of his soul there was a glimmer of hope - suddenly this cup would pass ... Or maybe Tukhachevsky was stopped by a purely physical fear of death?

It remained to try to escape abroad. At that time, of the high-ranking officials of the Red Army and the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs, it seems that only one person managed to do this - the head of the NKVD department for the Far East G.S. Lyushkov, who under Yagoda was the deputy head of the Secret Political Department and took an active part in the investigation the murder of S. M. Kirov. Genrikh Samoilovich was suddenly summoned to Moscow, ostensibly to be appointed to a responsible post in the central office of the people's commissariat. The old security officer immediately understood where the wind was blowing from, guessing that very soon he would have to visit the basements of his native Lubyanka in an unusual capacity as an accused of the wildest and most fantastic crimes. And on June 13, 1938, having gone to check the border posts, Lyushkov safely escaped to Manchuria, occupied by the Japanese, taking with him a number of secret documents. This escape greatly reduced the authority of Yezhov in the eyes of Stalin and became one of the reasons for the gradual removal of the "Petersburg worker" in "hedgehogs" from the leadership of the NKVD. By the way, we still do not know if Lyushkov managed to escape in the end. He existed quite comfortably in Manchuria until August 1945, cooperating with Japanese intelligence and exposing Stalin's crimes, in particular, for the first time proving the falsification of the trials in the assassination attempt on Kirov, as well as the Moscow political trials. However, Lyushkov categorically denied that Stalin or Yagoda had a hand in the shot at Smolny, and quite convincingly demonstrated that the murder of Kirov was an act of the mentally unbalanced loner L.V. Nikolaev, who avenged his troubles along the party and official lines. Further, the fate of Heinrich Samoylovich is shrouded in darkness. Did he die in confusion

Japanese retreat, or managed to move to America and hide there under a false name.

However, Lyushkov's path was clearly not for Tukhachevsky. And it's very far to the border, and you can't take any particularly valuable secret documents from the headquarters of the Volga District with you - for lack of such. But this is not the main thing. During the First World War, Tukhachevsky escaped from captivity five times and eventually reached saving Switzerland. However, from any point in Germany to the borders of the Swiss or Dutch was many times closer than from Kuibyshev - to any of the Soviet borders. Then, in 1915-1917, Tukhachevsky rushed with all his heart to his homeland in order to join the ranks of the Russian army again. Now I would have to say goodbye to my homeland and the army forever. Even succeed marshal almost

an unrealistic escape in that situation, what would follow next? Vegetation in the role of a pathetic traitor emigrant, buried both from Stalin's bloodhounds and from former white officers who did not forgive him for the defeat of Kolchak and Denikin. Tukhachevsky never opposed any political program to Stalin. And if the disgraced marshal tried to seize on the Russian national idea, he would have too many competitors in exile.

It was still easier for Trotsky, who did not voluntarily find himself outside the USSR. He fought with Stalin not only for power, but also for a great, albeit illusory, goal: communism and world revolution. Among the few communist emigrants, Lev Davidovich had supporters, and his followers occupied rather strong positions in the communist parties of a number of European and Latin American countries in the first years of the leader's emigration. Tukhachevsky, in exile, had no chance of uniting anyone, gathering around him. Worse than that: it would be necessary to forever abandon the cause of life - the army. Not a single country in the world, probably, would have trusted the defector Tukhachevsky to command a company.

Unlike Lyushkov, another prominent Chekist A.I. Uspensky, who served as People's Commissar of Internal Affairs of Ukraine, in November 38, just before the fall of Yezhov, went into hiding and, using professional skills, hid in different cities for five months USSR, until his colleagues finally tracked him down in Siberia and forced him to surrender. But Tukhachevsky had no such experience as Uspensky. Yes, and he probably understood that he had no chance of getting lost in the vast Soviet expanses: a figure too noticeable in all respects. Chekists even through the ground will find. Not for Tukhachevsky was the life of an oven cockroach, a life with one thought: no matter how they found and crushed.

Mikhail Nikolayevich had only to wait: he would carry it, he would not. It didn't. On May 22, 1937, he was arrested in Kuibyshev.

P. A. Yermolin was told about this event by the deputy commander of his corps for political affairs, divisional commissar D. D. Plow, who was present at the arrest of the marshal as a witness and heard from the NKVD that Tukhachevsky was a spy and a member of some counter-revolutionary organization. Daniel Danielovich himself, shot in the 38th, did not have time to write his memoirs. In more detail about the arrest of Tukhachevsky, P. Radchenko, a former security guard of the then secretary of the Kuibyshev regional committee, 1. P. Postyshev (in whose office everything happened) wrote:

"In the spring of 1937, M. N. Tukhachevsky arrived in Kuibyshev. He left his wife and daughter at the station in the passenger car, and he himself appeared in the regional party committee to introduce himself to Pavel Petrovich Postyshev. I was alone in the reception room. The secretary of the Chapaevsky city party committee was in the office. M. N. Tukhachevsky turned to me. I went to Pavel Petrovich and said: "Tukhachevsky asks for an appointment." "One minute," Pavel Petrovich answered me, "I'm finishing and I'll see Mikhail Nikolaevich right away." asked the marshal to wait. Less than 3 minutes later, the head of the regional department of the NKVD, senior major of state security Panashenko, the heads of departments Detkin and Mikhailov, burst into the reception room.

Only one detail is doubtful here: it is unlikely that Tukhachevsky went to Postyshev, at that time a member of the Politburo, to introduce himself on the occasion of taking office. After all, the marshal was arrested not on the first or even on the second day of his stay in Kuibyshev, but he had to introduce himself to the secretary of the regional committee immediately. Rather, it can be assumed that Postyshev, under some pretext, summoned Tukhachevsky to himself in order to facilitate the arrest of the Chekists (this assistance to the authorities did not save Pavel Petrovich - in January 38 they were taken out of the Politburo and shot). To take the marshal at the headquarters of the district, probably, they were careful, fearing excesses on the part of commanders loyal to him. Plau, most likely, was present not at the time of the arrest, but at the search in the saloon car of Tukhachevsky. Characteristically, the marshal was arrested by NKVD officers who held high positions. Either they did not dare to entrust such a responsible task to ordinary Chekists, like Radchenko, or the authorities of the Kuibyshev Directorate of the NKVD decided to distinguish themselves and personally take the leader of the conspiracy. They also did not survive when Beria's people began to change Yezhov's people. Therefore, by the beginning of the Khrushchev thaw, there were practically no survivors of both the participants in the arrest of Tukhachevsky and those who conducted his case.

On May 25, Mikhail Nikolayevich was brought to Moscow. By that time, investigators had accumulated dirt on Tukhachevsky. The key event was indeed the arrest of Feldman. Boris Mironovich broke down at once - the arrest itself shook him so deeply. He wrote to his investigator Z. M. Ushakov (Ushamirsky):

"You and the head of the special department, Comrade Leplevsky, who also spoke with me, have charged you with participating in a military Trotskyist anti-Soviet organization and are proposing to embark on the path of sincere repentance. Please acquaint me with the facts that expose me to participation in the above-mentioned organization. After that It will be easier for me to figure this out." Testimonies were later beaten out against Feldman from Putna and Primakov (the latter denied his guilt for almost nine months and could not withstand the psychological pressure and physical violence only on May 8, 1937). But the credit for the quick surrender of Boris Mironovich undoubtedly belongs to the investigator Ushakov. He himself was subsequently arrested and in October 1938, in his own testimony, he explained how he forced one of Tukhachevsky's closest friends to speak: "There was only one indirect testimony of a certain Medvedev against Feldman (corporate commander M.E. retracted previous testimony and was shot four days later

Tukhachevsky. - B.S.) ... On the first day of interrogation, Feldman ... wrote a statement about his participation in the military Trotskyist organization, in which Primakov recruited him ... Adhering to the principle

carefully studying the personal file and connections of the arrested, I took out the Feldman file from the headquarters and began to study it .. As a result, I came to the conclusion that Feldman is connected by intimate friendship with Tukhachevsky, Yakir and a number of other major commanders and has a family in America, with whom he maintains connection. I realized that Feldman was connected by conspiracy with Tukhachevsky, and I summoned him on May 19 early in the morning for interrogation. But at that time I was summoned to Leplevsky for an operational meeting, which was attended by about 30 employees participating in the investigation. I was given the floor about the results of Feldman's interrogation about the tenth

queues. Having told about Feldman's testimony, I turned to my analysis and began to orient the investigators towards a deviation in interrogations with the aim of revealing a military conspiracy undoubtedly existing in the Red Army ... As soon as the meeting ended, I ... called Feldman. By the evening of May 19, a testimony was written in my name about a military conspiracy involving Tukhachevsky, Yakir, Eideman and others, on the basis of which the decision of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (6) on the arrest of Tukhachevsky and a number of others was made on May 21 or 22.

In Ushakov's testimony, my attention was first of all drawn to the phrase about Feldman's "intimate friendship" with Tukhachevsky, Yakir and other military leaders. If it had been said today, or at least at the end of the 80s, it would have been perceived unambiguously: as an indication of the existence of homosexual intimacy between Feldman and the listed persons, that is, in fact, the bisexuality of Boris Mironovich, Mikhail Nikolaevich Iona Emmanuilovich ... On the existence of such a relationship between Feldman and Tukhachevsky seems to be indicated by one episode cited in the memoirs of the attending physician of the margtal, M. I. Kagalovsky:

"For the entire time that I was considered his attending physician, I did not have to prescribe a single prescription for him. True, on my advice, in the room adjacent to Tukhachevsky's office, a small gym was equipped with bars, a horizontal bar, a horse and dumbbells (in those for years it was a novelty!). Once, during the gymnastic exercises of Mikhail Nikolayevich, his close friend Boris Mironovich Feldman (oblique fathom in the shoulders and more than a hundred kilograms of weight) entered. Tukhachevsky grabbed the portly commander and began to rotate the mill, saying: "Hold on, Boriska !.."

Although, of course, it cannot be ruled out that healthy strong men just suddenly decided to tinker like children. Indeed, in the 30s, the word "intimate" did not yet have the unambiguity that it has acquired today, and could indicate close, friendly relations without sexual overtones. So the question remains open. It is indicative, however, that in publishing in 1988 the excerpt from Ushakov's testimony cited above, an employee of the military prosecutor's office, B.A. Viktorov, prudently replaced "intimate friendship" with "personal friendship."

At the same time, we emphasize that homosexuality in those years was quite common among Soviet leaders, although it was suppressed in every possible way and was criminally punishable. The "sharp-eyed people's commissar" Yezhov himself was convicted in February 1940 and shot not only for

absurd accusations of espionage and treason, but also absolutely fair - of falsifying many political cases and homosexuality (the latter, I will make a reservation, in democratic countries, including today's Russia, is not considered a crime). Denying everything else in court, Nikolai Ivanovich admitted the accusation of sodomy. And, by the way, during the investigation, he said that he excluded the "intimate relationship" of his second wife with the writer Isaac Babel - another proof that the word "intimate" in the late 30s also had a purely sexual meaning. And if indeed Ushakov found in the KGB dossier on Feldman information about his bisexuality and homosexual relationship with Tukhachevsky, then he undoubtedly received a powerful means of pressure on the person under investigation. A threat, or at least a hint, that this kind of information will be announced in court and at face-to-face

stakes with other defendants and witnesses, could induce Boris Mironovich to give all the necessary evidence in order to avoid shame. This circumstance could also force Tukhachevsky to cooperate with the investigator. In addition, Ushakov approached Feldman, and then Tukhachevsky, as they say, "with soul", assured that in the event of sincere repentance, Boris Mironovich would only face a minimal punishment. And he split.

On May 20, Yezhov sent Stalin, Molotov, Voroshilov and Kaganovich

protocol of the interrogation of Feldman, carried out the day before. In the accompanying note, the people's commissar emphasized:
"Feldman testified that he was a participant

military-Trotskyist conspiracy and was recruited by M. N. Tukhachevsky at the beginning of 1932. The participants in the conspiracy named by Feldman: Chief of Staff of the Transcaucasian Military District Savitsky, Deputy Commander of the Volga Military District Kutakov, former head of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee school Egorov, head of the Engineering Academy Smolin, former assistant to the head of the engineering department Maksimov and former deputy head of the armored department Olyshansky - were arrested. I ask you to discuss the issue of arresting the other participants in the conspiracy named by Feldman."

It was these testimonies that served as the formal basis for the decision to arrest Tukhachevsky. And on May 31, Feldman sent his investigator a remarkable note in many respects:

"To the assistant to the head of the 5th department of the GUGB of the NKVD of the USSR, comrade Ushakov. Zinovy Markovich! I wrote the beginning and end of the statement at my own discretion. I am sure that you will call me and personally indicate that it will not take long to rewrite ... Thank you for your attention and care - On the 29th I received biscuits, apples, cigarettes, and today cigarettes, from where, from whom, they don't say, but I know from whom.

In the statement attached to the note, Boris Mironovich agreed to give practically any evidence that the investigation would dictate to him:

"I ask you, comrade Ushakov, to call me personally to you. I want through you or comrade Leplevsky to convey to Comrade Yezhov, People's Commissar of Internal Affairs of the USSR, that I am ready, if necessary for the Red Army, to speak to anyone and anywhere anything and tell everything I know about

military conspiracy. And this purgatory (as you called my confrontation with Tukhachevsky purgatory) I am ready to go through. To show to all of you who extend a helping hand to me to pull me out of the dirty pool that you were not mistaken by determining at the very first interrogation that Feldman is not an inveterate, incorrigible enemy, over whom it is worth working, work hard so that he repents and helps the investigation strike by conspiracy. I ask you to convey my last appeal to Comrade. Voroshilov".

Feldman thought like a loyal soldier of the party. Since she said that there must be a military conspiracy and you were appointed a participant in it, you must confirm this and play your role well, for the good of the motherland, the Red Army, the party, communism ... And Boris Mironovich really wanted to live. The "impressive commander" hoped that with his repentance and readiness to confirm anything, he had already awakened the much-needed sympathy for himself on the part of the investigator, the sign of which were the same cigarettes and apples. That now they will shoot anyone, but not him. That he really has a helping hand. Feldman did not know that smoking good cigarettes and assimilating the vitamins so necessary for the body,

contained in apples, he has less than two weeks left. Instead of saving Boris Mironovich, they held him over the abyss a little more so that he could say what was required, and then ruthlessly pushed him down.

At the very first interrogations, the protocols of which were either not drawn up at all, or were not preserved, Tukhachevsky refused to admit his guilt. This is clear from his own handwritten testimony, dated June 1, 1937:

"I persistently and repeatedly tried to deny both my participation in the conspiracy and individual facts of my anti-Soviet activities."

Feldman spoke about his confrontation with Tukhachevsky as follows:

"I guessed for sure that Tukhachevsky was arrested, but I thought that he, having fallen into the hands of the investigation, would tell everything himself - by this he would at least a little atone for his heavy guilt before the state, but when I saw him at a confrontation, I heard from him that he denies that I made it all up..."

I think, however, that it was precisely the confrontation with Feldman that finally broke Mikhail Nikolayevich (her protocol, like the others, has not been preserved). If your best friend has already betrayed and is ready to slander both you and himself, there is nothing more to hope for. On May 26, Tukhachevsky declared:

"I was given confrontations with Primakov, Putna and Feldman, who accuse me as the leader of the anti-Soviet military-Trotskyist conspiracy. Please provide me with a couple more testimonies of other participants in this conspiracy, who also accuse me. I undertake to give frank testimony."

And on the same day he wrote:

"I admit the existence of an anti-Soviet military-Trotskyist conspiracy and that I was at the head of it ... The foundation of the conspiracy dates back to 1932."

The question has not yet been resolved whether Tukhachevsky was subjected to physical measures during the investigation, that is, to put it simply, whether he was tortured and beaten. Although as regards the other defendants, there are

certain data. So, a former employee of the NKVD, and later Deputy Minister of State Security Selivanovsky on December 10, 1962, reported to the Central Committee:

"In April 1937, the cases of Putna and Primakov were handed over to Avseevich. With brutal, cruel methods of interrogation, Avseevich forced Primakov and Putna to testify against Tukhachevsky, Yakir and Feldman Avseevich's work was set as an example by other investigators. Avseevich after that became standard in work with arrested persons".

According to a former employee of the Special Department Budarev, Avseevich, who headed one of the departments of this department, forced his employees to constantly be near Primakov, not letting him sleep and forcing him to confess. The person under investigation was given only 2-3 hours a day to sleep, and even then in the office where the interrogation took place and where food was even delivered. Such continuous pressure eventually broke the will of the arrested person. Moreover, according to Budarev,

"during the investigation of the cases of Primakov and Putna, it was known that both of these persons testified about their participation in the conspiracy after they were beaten in Lefortovo prison."

We also worked thoroughly with Yakir. Former NKVD officer A.F. Solovyov in 1962, in an explanation sent to the Central Committee, recalled:

"I personally was an eyewitness when they brought Leplevsky to the office ... Yakir. Yakir went to the office in uniform, but was taken out without buttonholes, without a belt, in an open tunic, and his appearance was deplorable, it is obvious that he was beaten by Leplevsky and Yakir spent 2-3 hours during this interrogation in Leplevsky's office.

And the "reference investigator" Avseevich then accused Leplevsky and Ushakov of using torture in order to shift the blame on the dead and avoid responsibility himself:

"In May 1937, at one of the meetings, the assistant head of the department, Ushakov, reported to Leplevsky that Uborevich did not want to testify. At the meeting, Leplevsky ordered Ushakov to apply physical methods of influence to Uborevich."

Traces of blood were found on one of the sheets of the investigation file of Tukhachevsky. It is not known whose blood this is and how it got there. Maybe Mikhail Nikolayevich was not beaten, but he simply had blood from his nose from nervous tension. Or is it the blood of investigator Ushakov in general - after all, he could also have nosebleeds. But, even if Tukhachevsky was not tortured, he already suffered greatly from the sheer humiliation of his position, which the investigators and jailers also tried to emphasize. For example, a former NKVD officer with a funny surname Vul recalled in 1956:

"Personally, I saw in the corridor of house 2 (People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs. - B.S.) Tukhachevsky, who was taken for interrogation to Leplevsky, he was dressed in a beautiful gray civilian suit (probably the same one that the security officers dressed him in the reception Postyshev. - B.S.), and over it was put on a prisoner's coat made of overcoat cloth, and on his feet were bast shoes. As I understand it, such a suit was worn on Tukhachevsky to humiliate him. "

The same was done with others. Avseevich, in his explanation to the Central Committee of the KISS, already in the time of Khrushchev, wrote that "the arrested Primakov and Putna were morally broken ... by prolonged detention in solitary confinement", where for many months they received "meager turn, by the seemingly not very significant circumstance that "instead of their clothes they were dressed in worn cotton 'Red Army uniforms, instead of boots they were shod in bast shoes, for a long time they were not cut or shaved ..." Well, for military appearance, uniforms have always played a particularly important role.

And the prisoners were already demoralized by the fact that instead of the usual cloth jackets with buttonholes, on which there were at least three rhombuses, and chrome boots, they are now forced to be content with Red Army cast-offs and bast shoes. As a result, as Avseevich noted, the transfer to the Lefortovo prison (where the prisoners were mercilessly beaten, which the investigator preferred not to talk about directly) and calls to Yezhov broke Primakov and Pugna completely, and both commanders began to testify.

But was it only a matter of torture and bullying? Lydia Nord put forward the version that the NKVD widely used hypnosis for its own purposes. It was as if Kirov's murderer Nikolaev and Tukhachevsky were hypnotized, as well as those who were involved in the same case with him. It is understandable that the sister-in-law's desire to at least somehow justify the behavior of Tukhachevsky, as well as her husband Feldman, during the trial. And in the materials of the 20th Party Congress held after the 20th Party Congress, it seems that there are data that, if desired, can be interpreted in favor of the assumption of some kind of

mental influence on the suspects.

Here, for example, is the testimony of the former NKVD officer Karpeisky about how the investigator Agas brought Eideman to an insane state:

"Eideman denied any connection to the conspiracy, stated that he had no idea about it, and argued that such an accusation was not consistent with either his lifelong behavior or his views ... Threatening Eideman with the use of physical measures if he will continue to persist and hide his conspiratorial activities from the investigation... Agas said that if Eideman does not testify now, then he, Agas, will continue the interrogation in another place, but he will interrogate in a different way. Eideman was silent. Then Agas interrupted interrogation and told Eideman to blame himself: he would be sent to prison, where his stubbornness would be broken ... Three days later, in the daytime, I was asked to urgently arrive at Lefortovo prison, where Agas was waiting for me. I went to prison for the first time... What I saw and heard that day in the Lefortovo prison surpassed all my imagination. There was an unimaginable noise in the prison, screams of investigators and groans, as it was easy to understand, were being beaten from the investigation rooms... I found the office where Agas was. Opposite him at the table sat Eideman. Leplevsky was sitting next to Agas ... On the table in front of Eideman lay a statement he had already written addressed to People's Commissar Yezhov stating that he admits his participation in the conspiracy and is ready to give frank testimony ... A day or two later, I again summoned Eideman for interrogation at Lefortovo prison. This time, Eideman behaved strangely during the interrogation, answered questions sluggishly, inappropriately, was distracted by extraneous thoughts, and when he heard the noise of a running engine, Eideman uttered the words: "Airplanes, airplanes." I did not draw up the record of the interrogation, and then I reported to Agas that

Eideman is in some strange state and that his testimony needs to be verified..."

Nevertheless, this case can rather be explained not by hypnosis, but by a nervous breakdown under the influence of both physical and mental torment, when the human consciousness is temporarily disconnected from unbearable reality and goes into the illusory world of memories of the past or dreams of a brighter future. For the former chairman of Osoaviakhim, it was the planes that had a bright past - after all, his organization was just engaged in the primary training of pilots. To hypnotize so many people for a period of at least a few weeks, and even so that they play their roles quite smoothly, is already pure fantasy. Yes, and then it is not clear why it took so long to fiddle with Primakov, if the Chekists had a powerful weapon of hypnosis in their hands. Or did Vitaly Markovich turn out to be extremely resistant to hypnotic influence? But then why did he finally begin to give the required testimony? It seems to me that the reason is not in hypnosis, but, among other things, in the fact that Primakov was severely beaten. The old proven method of Lefortovo investigators: "Are you going to talk?!" - when, after the refusal, fists and rubber truncheons fell upon the prisoner, it was especially effective in the conditions of a closed Soviet society. Relatives and friends did not know anything about the fate of the arrested, lawyers were not allowed to see them (there were no defense lawyers at the trial either). This situation had a depressing effect on those under investigation, suppressed the will to resist.

It can be assumed that the clue to the behavior of Tukhachevsky and his comrades does not lie in hypnosis. And not even in the special skill of investigators-inquisitors. One of them, Ushakov, after his arrest, lost any idea of the realities of the world around him, boasted during interrogations of his merits, counting on indulgence. Zinovy Markovich claimed: "I moved with Leplevsky to Moscow in December 1936 ... Literally from the first days I diagnosed the existence of a military Trotskyist organization in the Red Army and the Navy, developed a clear plan for opening it, and was the first to receive such a testimony from the former Commander of the Caspian flotilla Zakupnev... I was confidently moving towards the disclosure of a military conspiracy. military conspiracy ... on the basis of which the arrests began on the 22nd of the same month ... no need to say. On May 25, they gave me to interrogate Tukhachevsky, who confessed on the 26th, and on the 30th I received Yakir. Leading alone, without assistants (or "partners"), this trio, and having an indication that in a few days the case should be completed for hearing, I, almost not going to bed, pulled out more facts from them, more conspirators. Even on the day of the trial, early in the morning, I took away from Tukhachevsky additional testimonies about Apanasenko and some others. Among these "others" was the future People's Commissar S. K. Timoshenko.

How did Ushakov's homeland reward him for his hard work in the investigative field, for his supernatural instinct for the enemies of the people, for the sleepless nights? An increase in rank, an additional ration, an order, finally? Zinovy Markovich really received the Order, but he did not wear it for long - already in September 38 he was arrested. The real reward was ... a bullet in the back of the head on January 21, 1940. Like Tukhachevsky, Ushakov was shot as a German spy. Don't dig a hole for others...

The success of Ushakov, Avseevich and other investigators, bone-breakers and psychologists, working alone or in pairs, where the "evil" investigator provided the necessary contrast to the "good" one, depended heavily on the human material with which they had to deal. And the material as a whole turned out to be suitable. Neither Tukhachevsky nor the other defendants were fanatics of any idea, no matter how much Soviet propaganda tried to prove the opposite, presenting them as convinced communists, ready to give their lives for the party. By and large, disgraced military leaders were concerned about their own careers. Even during the civil war, Tukhachevsky, Yakir, Uborevich and others accepted both the Red Terror and the mass death of their compatriots in a fratricidal massacre. The same idea, with which they tied their fate in one way or another, was personified by the same Stalin, and the same Yezhov, and even the same investigators and judges, dressed in the same uniform as the defendants with the same red stars. The arrest gave Tukhachevsky and his comrades a feeling of spiritual emptiness and loss of life orientation. They were not ready to sacrifice their lives for ideals, because they did not seem to have ideals. Primakov's nine-month stubbornness can also be explained primarily by the fear of death. He understood that the accusations were execution charges, and he denied it, though only until, in May 1937, due to the haste, things moved on to a more serious conversation and began to deprive him of sleep and beat him. Torture and beatings not only caused physical

pain. When they began, it became clear to those arrested that they would be forced to confess at any cost, that this was not some kind of monstrous mistake or provocation, but politics, and there was almost no hope of salvation. And immediately tempting investigators appeared: you just admit it yourself, bring the other conspirators to clean water, repent, and you will get a discount, and there will definitely not be a tower. And in general: more, as many conspirators as possible, good and different, in high ranks and not very high ... At first, any brigade commander and even a major will do. How, at the February-March 1937 plenum, Voroshilov introduced the modest aviation major B. I. Kuzmichev as one of the organizers and executors of the assassination attempt on himself. And those under investigation willingly named the names or confirmed the participation in the conspiracy of those whom Yezhov's people pointed out to them. Perhaps Tukhachevsky, naming former cavalymen I. R. Apanasenko and S. K. Timoshenko close to Voroshilov among the participants in the "military-Trotskyist organization", wanted to take revenge on the Voroshilov group in such a peculiar way, acting on the principle: take the enemy to the grave with him. ... On the very eve of the trial, on June 10, Primakov gave testimony compromising three of the eight members of the Special Judicial Presence: army commanders N. D. Kashirina, 1. E. Dybenko and B. M. Shaposhnikov. True, as investigator Avseevich said, these testimonies were the fruit of the joint work of the former leader of the Red Cossacks and the current "iron commissar":

"At the last stage of the investigation, Leplevsky, having summoned Primakov, gave him a whole list of major commanders of the Red Army who had not previously appeared in Primakov's testimony, and on behalf of Yezhov proposed to write for each of them ... This is how Primakov's testimony arose on Kashirin, Dybenko, Gamarnik (obviously, Vitaly Markovich did not know that he was no longer alive. B.S.), Kuibyshev, Gryaznov, Uritsky, Kovalev, Vasilyev and others ... "

One way or another, but in 1937-1938, evidence was obtained from almost all Soviet military leaders, except, perhaps, Voroshilov (a member of the Politburo without a special sanction from Stalin

did not dare to speak). But whom to execute and whom to pardon, Iosif Vissarionovich himself decided, not without taking into account, of course, Voroshilov's opinion. If all the denunciations had been set in motion and all the falsified testimonies had been believed, not only a single marshal and army commander, commander and division commander, but even a company commander would have been left in the wild. Therefore, a certain sample was always carried out. Apanasenko and Timoshenko, who were named "Tukhachevsky", were not touched, Budyonny and Shaposhnikov were not touched, some others were not touched ... And the benefit of having dirt on each commander was considerable. When a meeting of the Military Council was held from June 1 to 4, dedicated to the "fascist military conspiracy", those present, hearing quite ridiculous testimonies of the accused about grandiose plans of treason and espionage, well understood that the same testimonies either already existed on themselves, or can be obtained at any suitable time. And if someone dares to publicly doubt the guilt of Tukhachevsky, Yakir and the others, He will easily become the head or participant in the next conspiracy exposed by Yezhov's valiant associates ... Therefore, everyone listened with approval to Voroshilov and Stalin, who read out the most striking confessions, and all 42 spoke commander obediently

they branded those with whom they served together yesterday. Later, 34 speakers themselves became victims of repression. Don't dig a hole for others...

At the Military Council, Voroshilov pretended to repent:

"I, as a people's commissar ... must frankly say that not only did I not notice the vile traitors, but even when some of them (Gorbachev, Feldman, etc.) had already begun to be exposed, I did not want to believe that these people, who worked impeccably, were capable of such monstrous crimes. My fault in this is enormous. "

And he immediately warned the members of the Military Council, who probably felt a serious threat in these words:

"But I cannot note a single instance of a warning signal from your side, comrades... I repeat that no one has ever signaled to me or the Central Committee of the Party that there are counter-revolutionary conspirators in the Red Army..."

Stalin argued that "the military-political conspiracy against Soviet power, stimulated and financed by the German fascists" was headed by Trotsky, Rykov, Bukharin, Rudzutak, Karakhan and Yagoda, and militarily the leaders were Tukhachevsky, Yakir, Uborevich, Kork, Eideman and Gamarnik. Iosif Vissarionovich convinced the high assembly that all the listed enemies of the people, except for Rykov, Bukharin and Gamarnik, were German spies, and some, in addition, were Japanese. I wonder what kind of imagination one had to have to believe that the Jews Trotsky, Yagoda and Yakir were working for Hitler? Stalin, meanwhile, dwelled on the crimes of Tukhachevsky:

"He handed over our operational plan - our operational plan, our holy of holies, to the German Reichswehr. Had a meeting with representatives of the German Reichswehr. Spy? Spy ..."

Likewise, the rest of the accused were classified as German agents on the sole basis that they met with officers of the Reichswehr. And that these meetings took place with the permission of Voroshilov and

he, Stalin, the leader, of course, did not speak.

Tukhachevsky, on the day the Military Council began its work, June 1, was forced to testify how, together with Yakir, Uborevich and others, he was preparing the defeat of the Red Army in the war with Germany. There were absolutely fantastic details. For example, Marshal wrote:

"I believed that if we prepare to undermine the railway bridges on the Berezina and the Dnieper, in the rear of the Belorussian Front, at the moment when the Germans begin to bypass the flank of the Belorussian Front, then the task of defeat will be completed even more decisively. Uborevich and Appoga were given the task of having for the duration of the war, sabotage groups of demolitionists in their railway units.

It is easy to see that as an act of sabotage and a link in the preparation of defeat, a completely routine thing is presented - the presence in the troops of the Belarussian District of demolition groups intended to destroy railway bridges: one's own - during the retreat, the enemy - during the offensive.

Tukhachevsky continued:

"Consideration of the action plan of the Belorussian Front, built on the task of defeating the Polish-German forces in the Warsaw direction, suggests that this plan is not provided with the necessary

forces and means. As a result, defeat is not ruled out even without the presence of any kind of wrecking... From the field of actually carried out wrecking work, which is directly reflected in the operational plan, it should be noted, first of all, the delay that the organizational department of the General Staff of the Red Army ... carried out on the issue of increasing the number of rifle divisions, a delay that creates the main operational danger for our armies on the Belorussian and Ukrainian fronts. The same dangerous delay was made on the issue of the wide deployment of the artillery and tank reserves of the high command.

Here Mikhail Nikolayevich, whose whole life has eleven days left, as sabotage represents a delay in the implementation of precisely those plans, for the implementation of which he always advocated, insisting on an increase in the number of divisions, and on the creation of tank and artillery reserves. At the same time, Tukhachevsky's testimony still contains the thesis of a German-Polish alliance in a future war against the USSR. It is possible that by this method the commander, who in recent months came to the conclusion that the Red Army was insufficiently prepared for a clash with the Wehrmacht, tried to deliberately exaggerate the forces of a potential enemy in order to encourage the country's leadership to increase the combat effectiveness of the armed forces and continue the implementation of those plans that were previously associated with his, Tukhachevsky, name. Therefore, he declared counteraction to IM to be sabotage.

With his testimony, the marshal wanted to warn Stalin and Voroshilov about a possible scenario for a Soviet-German war. Until the last minutes of his life, the Red Army remained for Tukhachevsky a favorite brainchild, and Russia was his homeland. The fate of the army and the country was not indifferent to him even in the inner prison of the NKVD (on the Lubyanka), where Mikhail

Nikolayevich was kept anonymously - No. 94 ("I want to forget my name and rank, to a number, to a letter, to change to a nickname," wrote Vladimir Lugovskoy in 1927; ten years later, the poetic metaphor became a tragic reality for Tukhachevsky and others). The Plan of Defeat emphasized:

"The Germans, of course, can easily capture Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania and from the occupied bridgehead begin their offensive operations against Leningrad, as well as the Leningrad and Kalinin (western parts of it) regions.

The only thing that would give Germany such a territorial seizure would be the possession of the entire southeastern coast of the Baltic Sea and the elimination of rivalry with the USSR in the navy. Thus, from a military point of view, the result would be great, but from an economic point of view, it would be insignificant.

The second possible direction of German intervention in agreement with the Poles is the Belarusian one. It is quite obvious that the mastery of both Belarus and the Western region does not provide any solution to the raw material problem, and therefore it is of no interest to Germany. The Belorussian theater of operations acquires decisive importance for Germany only if Hitler sets himself the task of completely defeating the USSR with a march on Moscow. However, I consider such a task absolutely fantastic.

There remains the third - the Ukrainian direction. In the strategic

With respect to the paths of the struggle for the Ukraine for Germany, they are the same as for the struggle for Belarus, i.e., this is connected with the use of Polish territory. In economic terms, Ukraine is of exceptional importance for Hitler. It solves both metallurgical and grain problems. German capital is making its way to the Black Sea. Even the mere possession of the Right-Bank Ukraine would have given Germany both bread and iron ore. Thus, Ukraine is the desired territory that Hitler dreams of as a German colony."

Tukhachevsky extremely accurately determined the main directions of the offensive of the Wehrmacht in the 41st and the main strategic goals of the Germans on each of them. And it cannot be said that the marshal was mistaken when he called the assumption that Hitler could plan the complete defeat of the Soviet Union with the occupation of Moscow fantastic. From the point of view of the 37th, the German army, which only two years ago began to deploy beyond the limits established by the Treaty of Versailles, was too weak for such a task. Another thing is that four years later she turned out to be immeasurably stronger.

Other defendants were also interrogated about plans to organize the defeat of the Red Army in a future war with Germany. At the same time, what the investigators dictated often completely contradicted the real operational plans, which was revealed at face-to-face confrontations. So, on May 26, 1937, Kork, who very actively cooperated with the investigation, testified:

"The question arose of how it is practically possible to use me - Kork in the implementation of defeatist plans for a military organization (the conversation allegedly took place in 1935, when August Ivanovich commanded the troops of the Moscow Military District. - B.S.) ... But here,

I remember that Uborevich intervened and, turning to me, said: "You will be on my right flank of the Western Front. You need to set the task: to advance along the Western Dvina to Riga. and lead to the disruption of your entire operation "".

At the confrontation, Uborevich categorically denied all this:

"Kork is telling a complete lie. For now, I want to notice only one of his falsehoods. He says that I told him that he would command the army on the right flank, that this army would go to Riga and be defeated. You can look at the 1935 operational plan of the Belorussian district, there you will not find a provision for at least one army of the right flank to go to Riga.

In 1962, the Operations Directorate of the General Staff checked this plan and found out that the truth was on the side of Uborevich, and not Kork.

It is noteworthy that in the "Plan of Defeat" Tukhachevsky considers only the option of waging war, when the German troops are advancing, and the Soviet troops are defending. Of course, in the testimony about wrecking work in the Red Army, a different scenario was in principle impossible. At the trial, even closed, it was impossible to casually mention aggressive intentions on the Soviet side - this completely contradicted the rooted propaganda stereotype. However, it is quite possible that by that time Tukhachevsky himself had come to the conclusion that the defensive nature of actions in the initial period of the war was preferable for the Red Army, given the relative

the weakness of the combat training of the Soviet troops in comparison with the troops of a potential enemy.

When Tukhachevsky drew up the "Plan of Defeat" in his prison cell, he again, at least for a short time, plunged into his native element of strategy. According to the text, it is felt that Mikhail Nikolayevich wrote it with enthusiasm, forgetting for a while what an unenviable position he is in. Or maybe, in the depths of his soul, he hoped that Stalin would appreciate him, Tukhachevsky, the breadth of thinking, professional erudition and accuracy of strategic analysis and leave him alive as his secret adviser on

military issues, under a false name, while for the whole world the marshal will be listed as shot as a conspirator and a German spy. After all, Bukharin asked Stalin in his letters from prison for the right to live under a different surname, even Petrov, in order to develop the political economy of socialism for the party and agitate against Trotsky.

On June 11, 1937, Tukhachevsky, Yakir, Uborevich, Kork, Feldman, Eideman, Primakov and Putna were tried by the Special Judicial Presence of the Supreme Court of the USSR in a closed session, without the participation of the prosecution and defense and without calling witnesses. The indictment on the evening of June 9, after a meeting with Stalin, Molotov and Yezhov, was approved by the USSR Prosecutor General A. Ya. Vyshinsky. The presence included marshals S. M. Budyonny and V. K. Blucher, commanders Ya. I. Alksnis, I. P. Belov, P. E. Dybenko, N. D. Kashirin, commander E. I. Goryachev, and also the infamous chairman of the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court, military lawyer of the 2nd rank V. V. Ulrich, who presided over the trial, but in fact did not play the role of a judge, but a prosecutor. Almost all the judges, except for Budyonny, Shaposhnikov and Ulrich,

were subsequently shot. Blucher was arrested and died from beatings during the investigation, and Goryachev, anticipating the inevitable arrest, managed, like Gamarnik, to shoot himself. X trial of the defendants was carefully prepared. Former investigator Avseevich recalled:

"After the investigation was completed, an operational meeting was convened, it was a day or two before the process, at which the head of the department Leplevsky instructed all the persons who took part in the investigation to talk to the defendants again and convince them to come to court confirmed the testimony given during the investigation. On the eve of the trial, I spoke with Primakov, he promised to confirm his testimony in court. Other employees of the department spoke with other defendants. In addition, instructions were given to accompany their defendants to court, to be with them in the waiting room. .. Just before the court session, at the direction of Leplevsky, I acquainted Primakov with copies of his own testimony (so that the poor fellow would not get confused in what the investigators had composed. - B.S.) ... On the eve of the trial, the arrested were summoned to Leplevsky, who announced that tomorrow the trial will begin and that their fate depends on their behavior at the trial ... Before the trial, Primakov called to Yezhov, where they apparently probed him how he would behave in court, and, as he later said, he was persuaded that at the trial he must behave in the same way as during the investigation. He promised Yezhov at the trial to expose the conspirators to the end.

As we will see later, Vitaly Markovich fulfilled and exceeded his promise, but Nikolai Ivanovich did not intend to fulfill his promise to save Primakov's life.

Before the trial, all the accused were allowed to apply with

letters addressed to Stalin. They repented and asked for mercy. Yakir's letter, read out at the 22nd Congress of the CPSU by the then head of the KGB A. N. Shelepin, is characteristic. True, Alexander Nikolaevich prudently omitted some passages (I highlighted these passages in italics):

"Dear close comrade Stalin. I dare to address you like that, because I said everything, gave everything and it seems to me that I am again an honest fighter, devoted to the party, state, people, which I have been for many years. All my conscious life has passed in selfless, honest work in front of the party and its leaders - then a collapse into a nightmare, into the irreparable horror of betrayal... The investigation is over. court and government ... Now I am honest with every word, I will die with words of love for you, the party and the country, with boundless faith in the victory of communism.

It is absolutely clear why the "iron Shurik" needed such overexposures, which completely change the meaning of the letter. Shelepin wanted to convince the ingenuous congress delegates that Yakir, in his address to Stalin, "assured him of his complete innocence." Accordingly, at the congress the resolutions announced by the chairman of the KGB in Yakir's letter were perceived quite differently than by the readers of this book: "Scoundrel and prostitute. I. Stalin"; "A completely accurate definition. K. Voroshilov" (Molotov either simply signed, or signed under the words of Voroshilov); "The bastard (Shelepin quoted softer: "Traitor." - B.S.), bastards and whores (instead, Shelepin mentioned the "hooligan, obscene word." - B.S.) one punishment - the death penalty. L.

Kaganovich".

It must be admitted that the resolutions of Stalin and his comrades fully correspond to the content of the letter. Indeed, what can be said about a person who admits to active participation in a conspiracy and immediately declares his honesty. True, Stalin, Voroshilov, Molotov and Kaganovich understood perfectly well that Yakir, Tukhachevsky and others did not arrange any conspiracy and were not German spies. But it was not for this that the members of the Politburo started the process in order to prove the innocence of the "conspirators".

On the same day, June 9, Yakir also wrote to Voroshilov:

"In memory of my many years of honest work in the past in the Red Army, I ask you to instruct me to look after my family and help her, helpless and innocent. I turned to N. I. Yezhov with the same request."

Kliment Efremovich the next day imposed a resolution: "I doubt the honesty of a dishonest person in general." Similar resolutions remained on the letters of other defendants. Yakir, Tukhachevsky and others did not know about this and, probably, continued to hope that they would remain alive. However, I think, with the exception of Mikhail Nikolaevich. Feldman, Putna, Kork, Eideman and Primakov, due to their less significant positions and, accordingly, their assigned role in the conspiracy, could still seriously count on avoiding execution. But Tukhachevsky, who was declared the leader of the "military Trotskyist organization," should have been aware that he would not be spared in any case.

At the trial, the defendants were dressed rather colorfully. Members

A special presence in subsequent reports addressed to Stalin and Voroshilov left us their portraits. On June 26, 1937, Budyonny wrote to the General Secretary:

"From the very beginning of the trial, Tukhachevsky shook his head when reading the indictment and at the testimony of all the other defendants, thereby emphasizing that, they say, the trial, the investigation, and everything that is written in the indictment - all this is not entirely true, does not correspond to reality. In other words, he took the pose of a misunderstood and undeservedly offended person, although outwardly he gave the impression of a person very confused and frightened. Apparently, he did not expect such a quick exposure of the organization, its withdrawal and such a quick investigation and trial ... "

On July 14, on the 37th, Belov informed the People's Commissar of Defense:

"Bourgeois morality interprets in every way -" a person's eyes are the mirror of his soul. "In this process, in one day more than in my entire life, I became convinced of the falsity of this interpretation. The eyes of this entire gang did not express anything such that they one could judge the bottomless abyss of the defendants sitting in the dock. The overall appearance of each of them was unnatural (it is unlikely that Ivan Panfilovich himself managed to preserve naturalness when on July 29, 1938 he was tried and shot on exactly the same charges as Tukhachevsky. - B. S.). The seal of death already lay on all faces. Basically, the complexion was the so-called earthy ... Tukhachevsky tried to keep his

"aristocracy" and his superiority over others ... Uborevich was more confused than the first two (that is, Tukhachevsky and Yakir. - B.S.). He looked like a barefoot in his civilian suit, without a collar or tie... Cork, although he was in a civilian suit, looked, as always, like a soldier... Feldman tried to be completely frank. He reproached his brothers in the trial that they, as college girls, are afraid to call a spade a spade, were engaged in the most ordinary espionage, and here they want to turn it into legal communication with foreign officers. Eideman. This guy looked more pitiful than everyone else. The figure softened to failure, he could hardly stand on his feet, he did not speak, but babbled in an intermittent, dull, spasmodic voice (an obvious consequence of "interrogations with passion" by investigator Agas. - B.S.N.). Primakov looked much thinner, showed deafness, which he had not previously had (and in this case, "measures of physical influence" had an effect. - B.S.). He was quite confident on his feet... Putna lost some weight, but there was no usual self-confidence in his voice..."

As evidenced by the surviving photograph of Tukhachevsky during the trial, he was changed from a luxurious civilian suit into a worn Red Army tunic, deciding that, unlike Uborevich and Kork, it was not appropriate for the head of a military conspiracy to flaunt in a civilian suit, and even expensive. It seems that the marshal was already indifferent to his fate, very depressed, and, not having the strength to directly reject all the accusations and declare the falsification of the case, he admitted some of the accusations and denied some, however, without attaching fundamental importance to this. He knew that the outcome of the trial was a foregone conclusion.

At the very beginning of the meeting, all the defendants, answering the questions of the chairman, stated that they pleaded guilty, and subsequently basically confirmed their testimony given during the investigation. Yakir was the first to speak, denouncing Trotsky, Tukhachevsky and the machinations

fascist states aimed at undermining the USSR. One gets the impression that he spoke a pre-memorized text, since he had to give unintelligible answers to the questions of the judges. When Blucher asked how exactly the defeat of the Red Army aviation in a future war was being prepared, Yakir admitted: "I really won't be able to tell you anything, except what I wrote to the investigation."

And to Ulrich's question, what was the sabotage in the field of combat training, he muttered indistinctly: "I spoke about this issue in a special letter."

Budyonny conveyed to Stalin the essence of the speech of the former commander of the Kyiv district as follows:

"Yakir dwelled on the essence of the conspiracy, which was faced with the task of restoring capitalism in our country on the basis of a fascist dictatorship ... In subsequent speeches by the defendants ... they all kept within the same framework of Yakir's speech."

Tukhachevsky and Uborevich refused to make a detailed speech, and their interrogation was conducted only in the form of questions and answers. Budyonny, in a memorandum to Stalin, stated Tukhachevsky's testimony as follows:

"GTukhachevsky, in his speech, first tried to refute his testimony, which he gave during the preliminary investigation. Tukhachevsky began by saying that the Red Army before the fascist coup

Hitler in Germany was preparing against the Poles and was able to defeat the Polish state. However, when Hitler came to power in Germany, who merged with the Poles and deployed 108 divisions out of 32 German divisions, the Red Army, in comparison with the German and Polish armies, was 60-62 divisions smaller in size ... "

There is clearly some confusion with the number of divisions. Probably Semyon Mikhailovich misheard. Indeed, back in 1935, Tukhachevsky, in the article "Military Plans of Today's Germany", indicated that by 1933 the Reichswehr had only 8 divisions, of which Hitler created 21 formations in 1934 and was going to bring their number to 36. 108 divisions, according to Mikhail Nikolaevich, Germany could put up only in wartime, after mobilization. The Red Army already in the 35th year had more than 100 divisions with a total strength of 930 thousand people. And by the end of 1937, the number of Soviet armed forces had already exceeded one and a half million.

Budyonny continued:

"Tukhachevsky tried to popularize before the audience present at the trial, as it were, his business considerations in the sense that he foresaw everything, tried to prove to the government that the situation that had arisen was leading the country to defeat, and that supposedly no one was listening to him. But Comrade Ulrich, on the advice some members of the Special Presence, interrupted Tukhachevsky and asked the question: how does Tukhachevsky link this motivation with what he testified at the preliminary investigation, namely, that he was connected with the German General Staff and worked as an agent of German intelligence since 1925. Then Tukhachevsky declared that, of course, he could also be considered a spy, but that he actually did not give any information to German intelligence ... "

Interestingly, when many years later, after the rehabilitation of Tukhachevsky, friends and acquaintances asked Budyonny how he could

to condemn innocent people to death, Semyon Mikhailovich, agreeing that the version of the conspiracy sounded quite fantastic, justified himself:

"But they themselves confessed to everything! How could I, in this case, doubt the conclusions of the investigation!"

I suspect that the former leader of the legendary First Cavalry was a little cunning here, because in reality he did not feel sorry for the old enemies who had been undermining him for a long time, and did not think about the truth of the charges against them.

Belov added to Budyonny:

"He (Tukhachevsky. - B.S.) also tried to demonstrate his broad operational and tactical outlook. He tried to hit the feelings of the judges with some reminders of past joint work and good relations with the majority of the court (revelations of this kind cost the majority of members of the Special presence, including Belov. - B. S.) He tried both to lead the process on the path of his role as positive, and to reduce his traitorous role to trifles ... "

It seems that on the last day of his life

the defeated marshal thought about his place in history, he wanted the transcript of the process to reflect his activities in the development and reform of the Red Army. I hoped that someday historians would read the transcript of the trial (its text of several hundred pages has not yet been published). True, editors in uniforms made significant adjustments to what was recorded by the stenographers. For example, in the testimony of Tukhachevsky, words were entered about his work for the Japanese General Staff (in order to retroactively link the conspiracy to the intrigues of Japan). Feldman's words:

"Of course, if they ask me, yes, state crimes, crimes, although this is trifling information, but still it is a crime, treason, this is how this case should be called," they changed it, and it turned out: "Of course, although my data on Compared with those that were passed on to the Germans, Japanese and Poles, Tukhachevsky and others are not particularly valuable, nevertheless I must admit that I was engaged in espionage, because this information was secret. Feel the difference!

After Tukhachevsky, Uborevich was interrogated, who began to balk and began to deny accusations of sabotage and espionage (without denying, however, participation in the conspiracy). The judges even interrupted his interrogation by taking an hour-long break. Then it was the turn of the "leading worker" Kork, who did a good job for the benefit of the investigation. His revealing speech took as many as 20 sheets of transcript. But the subsequent interrogations of Eideman, Putna and Primakov were again reduced to questions and answers. Moreover, Eideman was asked only three questions. Undoubtedly, Ulrich took into account that Robert Petrovich was in a semi-insane state, and did not ask him for details. The new "Airplanes, Airplanes..." could have deeply embarrassed the members of the Special Presence, who were not familiar with the working methods of the NKVD.

Then the floor was given to Feldman, who, like Kork and Primakov, was the hope and support of the investigation. Boris Mironovich began with a request:

"I would ask, Citizen Chairman, to let me briefly (I will not detain your attention for a long time) tell what I know as a member of the center, what I did. I think it will be useful not

only to the court, but also to all those commanders who are present here."

At these words, seven of the eight members of the Special Presence (except for the knowledgeable Ulrich) lost their hearts: well, as they will now be called among the members of the military Trotskyist organization! But no, it worked out this time. Feldman's speech, 12 sheets of transcript, although only slightly shorter than Cork's, did not contain the names of any of the judges. The marshals and commanders did not know that the evidence obtained during the investigation against them was filed into files and was only waiting in the wings. After the end of the interrogations, the defendants were given the last word. Belov reported his impressions of these speeches to Voroshilov:

"The last words were all spoken briefly. Kork and Feldman dragged on longer. Feldman and Kork asked for mercy. Feldman even agreed to the following: "Where is the care for a living person if we are not pardoned." The rest all said that death is not enough for such grave crimes ... They swore love for the Motherland, for the party, for the leader of the peoples, etc.

Stalin."

And the army commander made a general conclusion about the behavior of the defendants during the trial:

"They all did not tell the whole truth, they took a lot to the grave ... All of them had a glimmer of hope for pardon; hence the verbal love for the Motherland, for the party and Kt. Stalin."

According to B. A. Viktorov, an employee of the Main Military Prosecutor's Office, Primakov's last word turned out to be the most striking and incriminating in relation to other defendants. Vitaly Markovich did not spare anyone:

"I must tell the last truth about our conspiracy. Neither in the history of our revolution, nor in the history of other revolutions, was there such a conspiracy as ours, neither in terms of goals, nor in composition, nor in terms of the means that the conspiracy chose for itself. From whom conspiracy? betrayal, the defeat of one's country, sabotage, espionage, terror. For what purpose? To restore capitalism. There is only one way - to break the dictatorship of the proletariat and replace it with a fascist dictatorship. What forces did the conspiracy gather in order to carry out this plan? I named more than 70 people to the investigation conspirators whom I recruited myself or knew in the course of the conspiracy ... I made up my mind about the social face of the conspiracy, that is, what groups our conspiracy, leadership, center of the conspiracy consists of. The composition of the conspiracy of people who do not have deep roots in our Soviet country because each of them has his own second homeland. Everyone personally has families abroad. Yakir has relatives in Bessarabia, Putna and Uborevich have in Lithuania, Feldman is no less connected with South America than with Odessa, Eideman is no less connected with the Baltic states than with our country ... "

For this performance, the commander received posthumous praise from Budyonny:

"Primakov held himself in court in terms of courage, perhaps the best..."

But this speech, some passages of which could be very

useful during the struggle against the "rootless cosmopolitans", in the late 40s - early 50s, baffled the employees of the Main Military Prosecutor's Office, who were preparing the rehabilitation of convicts during the days of the thaw. Should Primakov be rehabilitated, since he helped Ulrich, Yezhov and Vyshinsky so earnestly? In the end, they decided (not in the prosecutor's office, of course, but in the Central Committee): it is necessary to rehabilitate. And Primakov's behavior was easily explained: during the nine months of imprisonment, they thoroughly "worked" with him, suppressed the will to resist. I think it's not just that. It's just that Vitaly Markovich memorized the speech dictated by the Chekists well (the phrase about Feldman, for example, almost verbatim coincides with Ushakov's testimony) and believed: if he says everything right, they will certainly pardon him. Moreover, some of the most dangerous accusations for himself, he preferred to reject. Budyonny testifies:

"Primakov very stubbornly denied the fact that he led a terrorist group against Comrade Voroshilov in the person of Schmidt, Kuzmichev and others..."

I understood that for the intent to commit a terrorist attack, they would almost certainly be shot. In general, all the defendants, in exposing others, tried to minimize or completely deny some of the "crimes" imputed to them or to minimize their role in them. So, Feldman and Tukhachevsky, in particular, insisted that the information they transmitted to the Germans was of no greater importance. It was hoped that if some of the charges fell away, there would be more chances for a pardon. But no one was spared...

After the court retired to deliberate, Ulrich visited Stalin, where he also met with Molotov, Kaganovich and Yezhov. Later, the former secretary of the court, Zaryanov, told those who were involved in the rehabilitation of Tukhachevsky and his comrades:

"Ulrich informed I. V. Stalin about the course of the trial. Ulrich told me about this. He said that there were Stalin's instructions on the application of capital punishment to all defendants - execution."

However, this last meeting with Stalin for the chairman of the court was in fact only a formality. Even before the start of the meeting, Ulrich knew for sure that everyone would have to be executed, regardless of the behavior of certain persons in court. Tukhachevsky, Yakir, Feldman, Kork and others were still answering the questions of the judges, were still making speeches of repentance, were still hoping for something... And Stalin had already sent a telegram to the republics and regions, where he spoke of them as if they were dead:

"To the National Central Committee, regional committees, regional committees. In connection with the ongoing trial of spies and pests Tukhachevsky, Yakir, Uborevich and others, the Central Committee invites you to organize meetings of workers, and where possible - peasants, as well as meetings of Red Army units, and pass a resolution on the need application of the highest measure of repression. The trial must be completed tonight. The announcement of the verdict will be published tomorrow, that is, on June 11. 11. \ 1. 1937 Secretary of the Central Committee Stalin. "

This is where the mass rallies and resolutions demanding the execution of participants in the "military-fascist conspiracy" that filled Soviet newspapers since the morning of June 12 come from.

And with the time of the end of the process, Stalin was not at all mistaken. At 11:35 p.m. on June 11, Ulrich announced a harsh and unjust

sentence. All eight were sentenced to death, deprivation of all military ranks and awards, and confiscation of all property belonging to them personally. They shot him right there, on the night of the 12th. Ulrich ordered the execution of the commandant of the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court, Ignatiev. The act of carrying out the sentence was signed by Vyshinsky, Ulrich, Tsesarsky, Ignatiev and the commandant of the NKVD Blokhin. Obviously, they directly shot Tukhachevsky, Uborevich and the rest of Ignatiev and Blokhin.

According to A. I. Todorsky, a few days after the execution, Voroshilov told him and several other military men that during

Tukhachevsky, Yakir and others shouted: "Long live Stalin! Long live communism!" Perhaps they believed to the last that all this was just a staging, and, as Nikolai G once pardoned the Petrashevites, when shrouds were already put on the first condemned, Comrade Stalin, the father of the people, will now send a courier with a decree to replace the execution by prison or camps. But it turned out that Nikolai Palkin, unanimously cursed by Soviet historians, was much more merciful than Joseph Stalin. Mercy from the General Secretary Tukhachevsky and his comrades did not wait. And that before death they proclaimed toasts to Stalin and communism, then there was nothing original in this. They are not the first, they are not the last. It's not for Hitler, in fact, to wish health. Yes, maybe Iona Emmanuilovich, Mikhail Nikolaevich and others had a glimmer of hope that the wise Iosif Vissarionovich was deceived by scoundrels like Yezhov and Ulrich, and he sanctioned the execution of his devoted servants only through a misunderstanding. And communism, in which Tukhachevsky forced himself to believe, will still triumph in the country and throughout the world under the leadership of the great Stalin. It is also possible that those doomed to death hoped that their "ideologically sustained" dying words would ease the fate of their relatives and friends. Needless to say, it didn't make it any easier.

In the end, the ranks of the NKVD got tired of listening to how, before their death, irresponsible enemies glorified the leader and the party, putting the Chekists present in an ambiguous position with their praises. And when one of the executioners reported to his immediate superior that many condemned men were dying with the words "Long live Stalin!"

"It is necessary to carry out educational work among those sentenced to death, so that at such an inopportune moment they do not sully the leader's name."

But that was later. They did not have time to carry out educational work with Tukhachevsky, Yakir, Uborevich, Kork, Feldman, Eideman, Putna and Primakov ...

In the leading states of the world, the fall and death of Tukhachevsky were considered events of paramount importance, and the activities of the accused were unambiguously associated with Germany. Thus, the American military attache in Moscow, Lieutenant Colonel Philip R. Faymonville, reported to Washington on June 12:

"On June 11, 1937, the Soviet press reported that eight people holding important command posts in the Red Army were arrested and charged with treason, expressed in maintaining contacts with the spy department of a foreign government. Report

this was unexpected, although rumors of an undercover investigation were circulating in Moscow for several weeks. The foreign government whose spy agents are said to have been involved with the accused is not named. From editorials and unmistakable references, however, it became clear that the defendants were accused of having criminal connections with the German secret police... The whole case, it seems, was heard at a closed session on 11 June. At a quarter to twelve on the evening of June 11 (that is, just ten minutes after the verdict was announced. - B.S.), it was broadcast on the radio that all the accused pleaded guilty and were sentenced to deprivation of all military

ranks and shooting. The Soviet press on the morning of June 12 repeated this information. There has been no announcement yet that the sentence has been carried out, but there is little doubt that the defendants have already been executed."

People in the USSR and beyond for several decades wondered what happened behind the closed doors of the courtroom. The trial and execution of Tukhachevsky also caused lively comments in the foreign press, especially in Germany, where they were outraged that the defendants were accused of criminal ties with German intelligence and the leadership of the Reichswehr. The Germans understood perfectly well that the participants in the "fascist military conspiracy" were made German and Japanese spies only because at that moment the Soviet Union had tense relations with these countries. There is no doubt: had the investigation and trial been carried out after the Soviet-German non-aggression pact of August 23, 1939, Tukhachevsky would have been declared an agent not of Germany and Japan, but of England and France. Fortunately, Mikhail Nikolayevich visited both countries and met with the local military and politicians. The German military magazine "Deutsche Ver" wrote in connection with the execution of Tukhachevsky on June 24, 1937:

"In the first days of May, "evidence" was collected about the alleged preparation of a coup by the Red Army. The charges against Tukhachevsky were collected in full and announced in the presence of everyone by the People's Commissar of Defense: Tukhachevsky was preparing a coup in order to declare a national military dictatorship headed by himself" .

The Wehrmacht undoubtedly received generally reliable information about the meeting of the Military Council, where Voroshilov and Stalin defame the "conspirators". The author of the article "Happiness and death of Tukhachevsky" that appeared highly appreciated the marshal's talent:

"Gukhachevsky was undoubtedly the most outstanding of all the Red commanders, and he cannot be replaced. History will someday tell us what role he actually played in building this army ... No one will ever know what happened in the process ... It is suggestive that three such well-known representatives of the younger generation as Uborevich, Yakir and Eideman joined Tukhachevsky ... If we take into account the suicide of Gamarnik ... then the matter becomes even more serious. Tukhachevsky wanted to be "Russian Napoleon", who, however, showed his cards too early, or, as always, he was betrayed at the last moment. Kaganovich - Stalin is again masters in the country, and the International triumphs. For how long?"

In another German military publication, Verfront, it was stated:

"In contrast to the short era of Tukhachevsky, parade generals and heroes of the civil war again came to the fore. At the same time, through the restoration of military councils and a significant strengthening of the political apparatus, dualism was restored, which was eliminated in the interests of the combat effectiveness of the army by the executed marshal Tukhachevsky."

The officers of the German army, as well as the Nazi political leaders, had no doubt that the evidence against Tukhachevsky and the others had been fabricated. They knew perfectly well that the marshal was not a German agent and was not even among those who

sympathized with the Reich. The racial theory professed by the Nazis did not allow them to believe that the candidate for the Russian Napoleon could have connections with the Jew and communist Trotsky. Therefore, in this part of the accusations against Tukhachevsky, the Germans also considered them to be imaginary. On the other hand, in Berlin they fully admitted that the youngest of the Soviet marshals could have Bonapartist plans, and they would very much like to see him as a fighter against "Jewish influence" in the Soviet leadership. The embodiment of such influence for Hitler and his followers, as well as for a significant part of the German officer corps, was L. M. Kaganovich, to whom, as they thought, Stalin was listening more and more. In Germany, until the 90s, nothing reliable was known about the Tukhachevsky trial. This circumstance supported the version of the marshal's Bonapartism.

If Hitler and his generals found out about the behavior of Mikhail Nikolaevich during the investigation and trial ... About his recognition of fantastic accusations. The fact that Tukhachevsky did not even try to state his program to be implemented if the coup was successful, but only agreed with the propaganda scenario of the conspiracy invented by the investigators. The fact that Tukhachevsky was dying with a toast to Stalin on his lips ... Indeed, the failed Bonaparte before his death could not glorify the one whom he was going to overthrow! And yet, about the fact that the materials of the court will never become public, the German journalist was not far from the truth. Only very small fragments of the transcript have been published, which, like raisins, have to be literally picked out from a document compiled in 1964 by the commission of the Central Committee of the CPSU with a boring clerical title: "Reference on the verification of the charges brought in 1937 by the judicial and party bodies of comrades Tukhachevsky, Yakir, Uborevich and other military leaders in treason, terror and military conspiracy". It turns out that someone (obviously, the security agencies) still has something to hide in the Tukhachevsky case? It will be possible to give a final answer to this question only after the publication of the full text of the transcript of the trial (unless, of course, it is destroyed by cautious party and KGB functionaries).

When, under Khrushchev, it began to be clarified which of what had been presented to Tukhachevsky and others was pure fiction, it turned out that, with the exception of the intention to achieve the removal of Voroshilov (which in itself is not a crime), everything else is refuted by the objective data of documents and the testimony of surviving witnesses. Thus, Putna testified that when in September 1935 he learned about his recall from the post of military attache in England to Moscow, he informed Trotsky's son Lev Sedov about it in Paris. From the latter, at the beginning of October, a package was delivered to London with his note to Putna and a "letter of confidence" from Trotsky himself

Tukhachevsky. After reviewing the letter, Mikhail Nikolayevich allegedly asked Putna to tell Sedov that Trotsky could count on him, Tukhachevsky. However, at the trial, the marshal said that he received a letter from Sedov, and not from Trotsky, but this inconsistency did not bother either the investigators or the judges. The script was created in a hurry, and there was no time to coordinate the testimony of the defendants in all details. On the other hand, they managed to get Putna and Tukhachevsky to admit that they met with Sedov in February 1936 in the Parisian cafe "Vienna" (the meeting was allegedly organized by Putna). The Commission of the Central Committee turned for information to the former Parisian resident of the NKVD in 1932-1938, Afanasiev, who willingly explained the absurdity of everything that was said on this subject at the Tukhachevsky trial:

"I headed the illegal residency in Paris, which was mainly engaged in the development of the activities of Trotsky's son - Sedov and his entourage ... We were aware of the most secret activities of Trotsky and Sedov. Therefore, when the question is raised, could there have been a meeting Sedov with Tukhachevsky, Putna and other military figures of the Soviet Union, which was mentioned at the trials that took place in Moscow from 1936 to 1938, it can be argued that this is not true ... Those intelligence and documentary materials that we received in the process of developing Trotsky, Sedov, Clement and partly the ROVS in Paris, neither directly nor indirectly confirmed the accusations that were made against the military leaders of the Red Army in connection with the case of Tukhachevsky, Kork, Gamarnik, Putna and others.

The Chekists very tightly "grazed" Sedov, whose entourage was stuffed with secret agents (it is assumed that she had a hand in the death of Trotsky's son). Here the bird would not have flown unnoticed, and even more so the margtal, the first deputy people's commissar of defense ...

And the same for other episodes of the case. For example, in court Tukhachevsky admitted:

"When in 1932 Romm brought me Trotsky's proposal to collect Trotskyist cadres, I agreed to this. Thus, I consider the beginning of the organization of our military conspiracy from 1932."

Here a clear discrepancy immediately catches the eye. If in 1935 Tukhachevsky informed Trotsky through Putna that he could count on him, then this can be understood in such a way that the marshal had not previously declared his support for Trotsky. And then it suddenly turns out that he was Trotsky's agent already from the 32nd year! Most importantly, Romm, who traveled to Germany with Tukhachevsky that year, was shot back in March 1937, and in his testimony, composed from beginning to end, the investigators had not yet ventured to insert the name of Tukhachevsky - at that time the second person in the Red Army after Voroshilov. To create a consistent picture of a conspiracy based on fictitious testimonies of dozens of unrelated persons in reality was beyond the power of Yezhov's people, especially in the short time frame that Stalin set for them.

Already after the end of the Second World War, the version became widespread, according to which a certain "red folder" about the secret ties of Soviet military leaders with the Reichswehr generals, transferred with Hitler's sanction for provocative purposes, played a fatal role in the fabrication of the Tukhachevsky case.

NKVD. In the Soviet Union, this story was made public by Khrushchev in his closing speech at the 20th Party Congress on October 27, 1961:

"Somehow, a rather curious message flashed in the foreign press that Hitler, while preparing an attack on our country, through his intelligence planted a fabricated document stating that comrades Yakir, Tukhachevsky and others were agents of the German General Staff. This "document", allegedly secret, got to the President of Czechoslovakia Benes, and he, in turn, apparently guided by good intentions, sent it to Stalin. Yakir, Tukhachevsky and

other comrades were arrested, and after that they were destroyed.

How was this version born?

For the first time, the thesis about the role of the German special services in the Tukhachevsky case was expressed by the former Soviet illegal spy Walter Krivitsky, who became a defector, in 1940, shortly before his mysterious suicide. However, a detailed story about the allegedly carried out by the Imperial Main Security Directorate (RSHA) under the leadership of its chief Reinhard Heydrich, the operation to discredit Tukhachevsky appeared only in 1953 in the memoirs of the former officer of the 6th RSHA Directorate - the Foreign Intelligence Directorate - Wilhelm Heötgl "Secret Front" (in German, the book was published under the pseudonym Walter Hagen). In the chapter "How Counterfeiters Killed a Soviet Marshal" he wrote:

"On June 11, 1937, the Soviet news agency TASS caused a worldwide sensation by reporting that, on the orders of the People's Commissar of Internal Affairs, eight senior generals of the Red Army, including the former Deputy People's Commissar of Defense, Marshal of the Soviet Union Tukhachevsky, were arrested and brought before a military court. The trial did not bring any surprises. The Soviet legal system was already well known to the world, and the parody of justice, the farcical trials against the Trotskyist opposition in 1936, together with the abundance of untrustworthy confessions of the accused, were still fresh in people's memory. That Tukhachevsky and his comrades admitted that they had organized an underground opposition movement, that they were in connection with the supreme military command of a power hostile to the USSR and transmitted information about the Red Army. The conviction of the accused and their speedy execution were also not a surprise. Under the chairmanship of Ulrich, head of the Military Collegium, and with the participation of the Prosecutor General Vyshinsky as public prosecutor, it was closed, gave rise to many comments. No one, however, knew what events had led to Tukhachevsky's conviction, and no one later believed the revelation that the head of the German secret service had played a decisive role in the case.

Heydrich decided to use his secret organization against the Soviet Union in 1935. Initially, he had at his disposal only meager funds and had to be content with second-hand information received from abroad, and especially from Russian emigrants living in Germany. Emigration in Germany had close ties with the Parisian emigrant colony, which, together with the colony in Belgrade, was of the greatest importance in Europe. Heydrich was thus able through his agents to establish

contact with the central committee of emigration in Paris. Here, his representative struck up a relationship with the former white general Skoblin, whose wife was the famous opera singer Nadezhda Plevitskaya. The couple occupied an important, if somewhat ambiguous, position among the Parisian emigration, since it was believed that they could not be completely trusted. Heydrich's agent found out that Skoblin maintains excellent relations with the highest circles in Moscow. This in itself was surprising, since in no other case had the émigré secret service been successful in infiltrating the upper echelons of the Soviet hierarchy. In subsequent work with Skoblin, the German agent found that, like his

to the infamous compatriot Yevno Azef, who alternately sold revolutionaries to the tsarist police and vice versa, the general worked for both sides - both for the Soviet Union and against it. Skoblin's double game did not seem to Heydrich sufficient reason to refuse to use it, and Skoblin, for his part, showed complete readiness, at some price, to add the German secret service to the list of his employers. Heydrich received information from him, until the end of 1936, that Tukhachevsky planned to seize power with the help of the Red Army and get rid of Stalin and the Bolshevik regime as a whole. Whether this information was true remains an open question, since the chief of the NKVD, Yezhov, who provided Vyshinsky with evidence against Tukhachevsky, was soon executed himself. Of the witnesses to how the trial was prepared, hardly anyone is now alive, and it would be overly optimistic to expect that Vyshinsky, Marshal Voroshilov, who played an important role, or Stalin himself would ever speak. In any case, this question is not of great importance for solving the problem. The only question that really matters is whether the evidence that Tukhachevsky conspired against Stalin was fabricated in the same way as the evidence of his treacherous ties to some foreign power.

It is impossible to determine exactly when Heydrich came up with the idea of a monstrous intrigue that was supposed to cause the fall of Tukhachevsky. But it may even have been born before the decisive conversation with Hitler and Himmler on the very eve of Christmas 1936, when he first told his colleagues about Tukhachevsky's clear intention to seize power. Both Hitler and Heydrich seem to have assessed the likelihood that this split in the Soviet system would enable Germany to launch a disarming strike against the USSR. There were two possible courses of action. Germany could either support Tukhachevsky and thus help him eliminate Bolshevism, or hand over Tukhachevsky to Stalin and thereby damage the military power of the Soviet Union. Each of the options seemed equally tempting in terms of its potential. On the one hand, it seemed obvious that it would be much easier to cause the fall of Tukhachevsky than to support him in a much more risky undertaking - an attempt to overthrow the masters of the Kremlin. On the other hand, German participation in the destruction of Tukhachevsky and the subsequent weakening of the Red Army would lead to a revision of the policy of cooperation between the armed forces of Germany and the Soviet Union, carried out before.

Russo-German military cooperation was intensified in 1926 when Colonel-General von Seeckt, chief of staff of the 100,000-strong Reichswehr, requested and received technical assistance from the Russians. Von Seeckt's successors, Generals Gaye and Hammerstein-Equord, continued this policy with the full support of the Parliamentary Reich Defense Minister. There was no clear political concept behind this cooperation. The generals mainly wanted military-technical assistance, especially in providing equipment and training grounds for the training of officers called upon to master armored vehicles, combat aircraft and other types of weapons prohibited for the Reichswehr by the Treaty of Versailles. In turn, the Germans were ready to provide the Red Army with the experience of their officer corps and their knowledge of the basic principles of military leadership. The Russians, for their part, may have seen military cooperation as a starting point for the future.

political rapprochement, but no practical results in the political sphere have been achieved.

When Hitler became Chancellor, the situation immediately changed. There is no doubt that from the very beginning he considered a decisive life-and-death struggle against Bolshevism inevitable. Such a political approach in the long run ruled out military cooperation between the armed forces of the two countries. Less understood is his rationale for not being able to crush or at least drastically weaken "the enemies of the whole world of the Bolsheviks" by actively or otherwise supporting a coup that Marshal Tukhachevsky was thought to be plotting. The already mentioned difficulty of giving any practical help undoubtedly influenced Hitler, but Heydrich's intervention certainly tipped the scales decisively. He was convinced that the traditional inclination towards a Russo-German alliance was still alive in the Prussian-German officer corps, and exaggerated both the political significance of this factor and the possible results of any continuation of military ties. Both of these circumstances Heydrich considered a very real danger on the agenda.

Nothing could more effectively undermine the cooperation of the two armies than proving - in the eyes of public opinion - that in reality this cooperation serves only as a cover for espionage and treason. This could be staged in various ways, in Germany or in Russia, with German or Russian generals as defendants, whichever seemed more appropriate in the circumstances. And Heydrich, without hesitation, was ready to put forward false accusations of treason against certain German generals. On the whole, however, it seemed to him better to choose Moscow as the scene of action and Tukhachevsky as the victim; the Soviet system provided exceptionally favorable means for staging, while in Germany such a staging might have been much more difficult to implement. In addition, when carrying out an action in Moscow and against a partner of the Wehrmacht, it became possible to inflict an indirect blow and, by the leaders of the German armed forces, and, undoubtedly, for Heydrich, this latter was a highly desirable, even if only an additional goal. Since his shameful dismissal from the Navy (associated with accusations of homosexuality. - B.S.), he has experienced an almost pathological hatred

to the leaders of the armed forces and never missed a chance to inflict wounding blows on them. The Tukhachevsky case certainly gave him an excellent opportunity to do so.

After a long and highly secret discussion, Heydrich was able to convince Himmler and, more importantly, Hitler to accept his way of thinking. In internal Soviet quarrels, Germany must take the side of Stalin. Tukhachevsky and his comrades must be presented as traitors, and the indignant Red Army will, among other things, be deprived of its most capable officers. All that needs to be done for this is to provide Stalin with evidence of Tukhachevsky's treacherous connections with the German high command; information about his intention to commit a coup, designed to complete the picture, could safely be left to General Skoblin for clarification (or fabrication).

Veya operation was prepared in the strictest secrecy. It lasted from 1936 to 1937. Heydrich in brief

informed only his immediate subordinates about it, and then he only informed them

the minimum information required to perform their roles. Later, SS General Hermann Behrens told me how he worked out the technical details of the operation. Apart from Himmler and Heydrich himself, only Behrens knew the whole secret of the case. I knew him very well during the war, when he was chief of the SS and police forces in Belgrade).

Initially, Heydrich tried to involve the chief of the Abwehr, Admiral Canaris, in a conspiracy against Tukhachevsky. He asked Canaris to allow him to take any documents in the admiral's possession relating to the correspondence of the German High Command with the Russians regarding military cooperation, and in particular any genuine letters of Tukhachevsky and other senior Soviet officers. But Canaris, who knew Heydrich too well (at one time he was the captain of the cruiser on which the future chief of the RSHA served. - B.S.) and immediately suspected foul play, found some pretext and refused. Nevertheless, Heydrich - or rather Behrens - succeeded in getting what he wanted without the help of Canaris. How this was done is not entirely clear; but it is known that on at least one occasion Behrens broke into the archives of the German High Command and stole a number of documents. Having received what he needed, Behrens in April 1937 began to prepare the necessary fakes in the basement of the Gestapo building on Prinz-Albrecht-Strasse in Berlin, isolated from the outside world. For this purpose, he equipped a laboratory with all the necessary technical devices and personally took care of the security measures. The laboratory was completely isolated from the rest of the building. Only those who directly worked there could enter it, and a specially selected guard stood at the entrance. Heydrich also called on the services of two recent GPU agents who had been captured a few months earlier and called to their aid, while a third Russian agent, who voluntarily joined the Berlin Gestapo, was directly involved in the fabrication of fakes. With regard to this third agent, Behrens held a completely different opinion than Heydrich, reaching

even to the assertion that it was the Russian secret service, and not Heydrich, that gave rise to the idea of falsifying the case against Tukhachevsky, and that Heydrich was, without realizing it, just a tool in the hands of the GPU.

What can be said for sure is that the correspondence of Tukhachevsky and his colleagues with senior German generals, covering a period of about twelve months, was fabricated in the basement of the Gestapo on Prinz-Albrecht-Straße, and from it it followed that Tukhachevsky was able to secure a promise of support from side of the Wehrmacht in the implementation of the putsch, which he intended to undertake against Stalin. The documents were prepared quickly, and just a few days later, in early May, Himmler was able to hand over the dossier, quite a voluminous folder, into Hitler's hands. In addition to genuine correspondence, the dossier contained a wide variety of documents, including receipts from Russian generals for receiving very significant sums of money, allegedly received by them from the German secret service in exchange for the information provided.

The letters attributed to Tukhachevsky and his accomplices were carried on

imagine all signs of authenticity; marginal marks in the form of initials indicated that the letters were read by von Seeckt, Hammerstein, Canaris and a number of other generals, and were reproduced with complete accuracy, and second copies of letters written by German generals to Russian conspirators were also included in the folder. Finally, in order to involve Canaris in the conspiracy, Heydrich included a fake letter in the dossier in which Canaris thanked Tukhachevsky and one or two other generals for their information about the Red Army. Hitler commended the manner in which the material had been prepared and authorized its release to the Russian Secret Service.

There was an original plan to pass the false documents through the Czechoslovak General Staff, which was known to be in close contact with the Russians. The connection was established through an agent sent by Behrens to Czechoslovakia under an assumed name in order to make the necessary arrangements. The Czechs refused, however, to disclose the channels through which the documents would be sent to Stalin, and therefore it seemed that there was no guarantee that the documents would not fall into the hands of one of Tukhachevsky's friends along the way. Heydrich dismissed the idea as too risky and preferred to go directly to the Soviet embassy in Berlin. He got in touch with one of the embassy employees, who was known to the Gestapo to be in fact a member of the Russian secret service, and quite openly offered to transfer the information to his disposal. The Russian immediately flew to Moscow, from where he soon returned, accompanied by a special representative of Yezhov, the head of the Russian GPU (at that time already the NKVD. - B.S.). This representative stated that he was personally authorized by Stalin to negotiate the purchase of documents.

Heydrich never had to enter into official deals with the Soviet authorities; and it was even more difficult for him to imagine that he would have to sell them falsies of his own making; but with great agility he adjusted his tactics and demanded the sum of three million rubles. That same evening, he informed Hitler of his intentions and received permission to hand over the documents. The next day, Behrens handed over the folder to the Soviet representative and

received in return a weighty package with banknotes in the amount of three million rubles.

Heydrich handed over these bills to the Russian branch of the German secret service. By chance, however, three German agents, who paid with some of them in Russia, were immediately arrested by the GPU. I learned from my official duties that these agents were lost. It has been suggested that either the Russians paid with counterfeit banknotes, or with real ones, but marked in a special way so that they could be easily identified when making payments. Further issuance of this money to agents was immediately stopped. The fact that the Russians paid with a counterfeit coin for his well-made counterfeit infuriated Heydrich for all subsequent years. It was, so to speak, a stain on his masterpiece, which deprived him of the full satisfaction of his success.

The mechanism launched by Heydrich worked flawlessly, and Marshal Tukhachevsky and his comrades were immediately arrested. The trial against them opened at 10 am on 10 June. By 9 o'clock that evening it was all over. The hearing began with Voroshilov's speech about a military conspiracy, for

followed by the interrogation of the accused. According to Soviet reports, the defendants, overwhelmed by the mass of evidence, faced with letters written in their own handwriting and addressed to the German High Command, broke down and pleaded guilty. Vyshinsky's final speech lasted a little over twenty minutes. He demanded that the accused be expelled from the ranks of the Red Army and sentenced to capital punishment. A few minutes later, the verdict was announced and the death sentence was pronounced. The insignia and orders were immediately torn off the accused, and twelve hours later they were executed. The platoon that carried out the shooting is said to have been commanded, on Stalin's orders, by Marshal Blyukher, who a few years later himself became a victim of Soviet justice. Indeed, with the exception of two marshals, Voroshilov and Budyonny, all members of the Tukhachevsky trial sooner or later died a violent death.

Heydrich proudly thought that his fakes played a decisive role in the condemnation of the Russian marshal. Until the last day of his life, he was sure of the great importance of what he had done. General Behrens, however, was not so convinced of this. At first he was as unequivocal in his assessment of what had happened as Heydrich, but as the Russian army got closer to Belgrade in 1945 (actually - in 1944 - B. S.), he increasingly told me about your doubts. His own fakes haunted him. The decisive defeat that Germany was suffering at the hands of the Russians made him wonder if it would be better to support Tukhachevsky's efforts to overthrow Stalin. The fall of Tukhachevsky, he declared in 1944, delayed the building of the Russian army only for a very short time, and the Bolshevik regime remained intact and did not face any challenge at home. Stalin's energy and organizational flair quickly eliminated the slight hitch in the development of Soviet weapons caused by the Tukhachevsky affair. A living Tukhachevsky, Behrens taught, would be more valuable to Germany than ten Vlasovs. Even if active support for the putsch plans attributed to Tukhachevsky were not feasible, since Skoblin had already betrayed them, Germany would have to do everything possible to save the life of the marshal and take out

him out of the country."

When Heettl's book appeared, practically nothing was known for certain about the Tukhachevsky trial. Historians have wondered if the retired intelligence officer is writing the truth or is composing to make his memoirs more like a detective novel and to attract the attention of readers. And then in 1956 came out (first - in English translation) the memoirs of the former chief Höttl, head of the 6th department of the RSHA, SS Brigadeführer and Police Major General Walter Schellenberg, remembered by Russian viewers from the television series "Seventeen Moments of Spring", where his role was brilliantly played Oleg Tabakov (so brilliant that Schellenberg's relatives later told the artist that they saw Uncle Walter as if revived on the screen). Schellenberg spoke about the Tukhachevsky case in almost the same words as Höttl. It turned out that two independent witnesses reported on the fabrication of the dossier by Heydrich, and one of them, the head of foreign intelligence, was directly subordinate to the head of the Imperial Main Security Directorate and could draw information, as they say, first-hand. But a careful study of Schellenberg's message and its comparison with Höttl's memoirs convinces us that in both cases we are dealing with pure fiction, and with regard to the author of "Secret Front" there is every reason to talk about the most ordinary plagiarism. Here

Schellenberg's story:

"At that time (at the beginning of 1937. - B.S.) I had to prepare for Heydrich an essay on the connections between the Red Army and the command of the German ground forces. The initiator of this task was the Pomeranian landowner Janke. Before that, I knew him very superficially and did not suspect that for many years he had been one of the leading figures of the German secret service ... During the First World War, Jahnke, as an employee of German intelligence, organized large strikes of American dockers and loaders in the Atlantic ports of the United States. Returning to Germany, he became an adviser on intelligence issues from Rudolf Hess, without fear of openly expressing his opinion both to Hess and to Hitler. "There is only one person," he once told me, "of whom I am afraid. This is Heydrich. He is more dangerous than a wild cat." When I presented to Heydrich the material I had collected about the relations of the former Reichswehr ... and the Wehrmacht with the Red Army, I still did not suspect the consequences that this event would lead to. And only after a while the blinkers fell from my eyes. This happened in June 1937. The TASS news agency reported that Deputy People's Commissar for Defense Marshal Tukhachevsky was brought before a military court and, at the request of the Prosecutor General Andrei Vyshinsky, was sentenced to death along with eight other defendants. The sentence was carried out in the evening of the same day. The charge read : betrayal of the motherland as a result of ties with the military circles of one state hostile to the USSR;

The announcement of this verdict belongs to the most interesting pages of one of the most mysterious chapters in the history of recent decades, the true background of which ... has not yet been sufficiently clearly elucidated. In both Soviet Russia and National Socialist Germany, great efforts were made to shroud the Tukhachevsky affair in mystery. I will try, relying on the documents that have passed through my hands and on the basis of the events, of which I myself was an eyewitness and participant, to introduce

contribution to the resolution of this matter. For this, it seems necessary to me to cast a glance at the previous development of relations between the German and Soviet armies.

As evidenced by the documents I have studied, the first contacts with the Red Army ... were established in 1923 under the leadership of the then Minister of Defense Gessler and continued by Colonel-General Seeckt. With the help of these connections, the German command wanted to give the German officers of the ground forces ... the opportunity to learn at Russian training grounds to use modern types of weapons (aircraft and tanks), which, under the Treaty of Versailles, the Reichswehr was forbidden to have. In turn, the German General Staff acquainted the Russian army with its experience in the field of tactics and strategy. Later, cooperation extended to armaments, as a result of which the Germans, in exchange for patents that they provided at the disposal of the Red Army, received permission to build aircraft and other defense plants in Russia. So, for example, the Junkers firm founded its branches in Fili and Samara ...

After Seeckt, cooperation with the Red Army was continued by his successor, General Gaye, and later by Generals Hammerstein and von Schleicher. In Russia, the same line was pursued by Stalin, who replaced Lenin. When the National Socialists came to power in Germany, the leadership

The German Communist Party was instructed from Moscow to consider enemy No. 1 not the NSDAP and thus the command of the Wehrmacht, but the Social Democratic Party. In the political leadership of the NSDAP, Stalin then saw a kind of fellow traveler in achieving his own revolutionary communist goals in Europe, and he expected that one day Hitler would turn his weapon against the bourgeoisie of the West, the struggle against which should exhaust his strength ...

Heydrich received a message from a White Guard general living in Paris, a certain Skoblin, that the Soviet General Tukhachevsky, in cooperation with the German General Staff, was planning to overthrow Stalin. True, Skoblin could not provide documentary evidence of the participation of the German generals in the plan of the coup, but Heydrich saw such valuable information in his message that he considered it appropriate to accept a fictitious charge of the Wehrmacht command, since the use of this material would have stopped the growing threat from the Red Army, which outnumbered the might of the German army. Jahnke, whom I mentioned, warned Heydrich against hasty conclusions. He expressed great doubts about the authenticity of Skoblin's information. In his opinion, Skoblin could well play a dual role on the instructions of Russian intelligence. He even believed that the whole story was inspired. In any case, it was necessary to take into account the possibility that Skoblin handed over to us the plans for a coup, allegedly hatched by Tukhachevsky, only on Stalin's instructions. At the same time, Jancke believed that Stalin, with the help of this action, intends to induce Heydrich, correctly assessing his character and views, to strike at the Wehrmacht command and at the same time destroy the general's "front", headed by Tukhachevsky, which became a burden for him; For reasons of inner-party policy, Stalin, according to Janke, wanted the reason for the elimination of Tukhachevsky and his entourage to come not from himself, but because of

borders. Yanke justified his distrust on the information he received from Japanese intelligence, with whom he maintained constant contacts, and also on the fact that Skoblin's wife, Nadezhda Plevitskaya, the former "star" of the St. Petersburg Court Opera, was an agent of the GPU ...

Heydrich not only rejected Janke's warning, but also considered him a tool of the military, acting unquestioningly in their interests, confiscated all his materials and subjected him to three months of house arrest. (Only in 1941 did I manage to reconcile Janke and Heydrich.)

Meanwhile, Skoblin's information was passed on to Hitler. He now faced a difficult problem that needed to be solved. If he had spoken out in favor of Tukhachevsky, Soviet power might have come to an end, but failure would have drawn Germany into a premature war. On the other hand, exposing Tukhachevsky would only strengthen Stalin's power.

Hitler decided the issue not in favor of Tukhachevsky. What prompted him to take such a decision remained unknown to either Heydrich or me. He probably believed that the weakening of the Red Army as a result of the "decimation" of the Soviet military command would provide its rear in the fight against the West for a certain time.

In accordance with Hitler's strict orders, the Tukhachevsky case was to be kept secret from the German command so as not to warn the marshal in advance of the danger that threatened him. IN

Because of this, the version of Tukhachevsky's secret connections with the command of the Wehrmacht should continue to be supported; it was necessary to extradite him as a traitor to Stalin. Since there was no written evidence of such secret communications for the purposes of the conspiracy, on the orders of Hitler (and not Heydrich), the Wehrmacht archives and the office of military intelligence were raided. The head of the criminal police, Heinrich Nebe, seconded specialists from the relevant department of his department to the capture groups. In fact, some genuine documents about the cooperation of the Wehrmacht with the Red Army were discovered. To cover the traces of the night invasion, paper was lit at the break-in site, and when the teams left the building, a fire alarm was given in order to disinform.

Now the resulting material should be properly processed. This did not require gross falsifications, as was later claimed; it was enough just to eliminate the "gaps" in the randomly assembled documents. Within four days, Himmler was able to present Hitler with a voluminous pile of materials. After careful study, the "Tukhachevsky documents" improved in this way should have been handed over to the Czechoslovak general staff, which maintained close ties with the Soviet party leadership. However, Heydrich later chose an even more reliable path. One of his most trusted men, SS-Standartenführer Bereis, was sent to Prague to establish contact there with one of the close friends of the then President of Czechoslovakia, Beneš. Based on the information received, Benes wrote a personal letter to Stalin. Shortly thereafter, a response came from Russia through President Beneš with a proposal to contact one of the employees of the Russian embassy in Berlin. So we did. An employee of the embassy immediately flew to Moscow and returned with a confidant of Stalin, equipped with special documents signed

chief of the GPU Ezhov. To everyone's amazement, Stalin offered money for materials on the "conspiracy". Neither Hitler, nor Himmler, nor Heydrich counted on a reward. Heydrich demanded three million gold rubles - in order, he believed, to save face in front of the Russians. As the materials were received and skimmed through, Stalin's special emissary paid the fixed amount. This was in the middle of May 1937.

On June 4, Tukhachevsky, after an unsuccessful suicide attempt, was arrested and a closed trial was initiated against him on Stalin's personal order. According to TASS, Tukhachevsky and the other defendants confessed to everything. A few hours after the verdict was announced, the execution took place. The execution was commanded, on the orders of Stalin, by Marshal Blucher, who later fell victim to another purge himself.

Part of the "Judas money" I ordered to be put under the knife, after several German agents were arrested by the GPU when they paid with these bills. Stalin made the payment in large banknotes, all of whose numbers were registered by the GPU.

The Tukhachevsky case was the first illegal prologue of the future alliance between Stalin and Hitler, which, after the signing of the non-aggression pact on August 23, 1939, became an event of world significance.

This spy story is simply breathtaking. But the attentive reader must have noticed that Schellenberg mostly

repeats what Hoettl said, and with all its inconsistencies, the most striking of which is the legend that the execution of Marshal Tukhachevsky and his comrades was commanded by another marshal, Blucher, who was soon destined for the same fate. In fact, as we have already had the opportunity to see, Tukhachevsky, Yakir, Uborevich, Feldman and the rest were shot by commandants Ignatiev and Blokhin. And there was no platoon or squad of soldiers that carried out the execution. It was in the German army that war criminals were shot by a specially appointed execution team. In the NKVD, master performers were shot. Shot alone, point-blank, in the back of the head. The same Blokhin may well claim to be included in the Guinness Book of Records: once during the night he "brought to waste" up to a thousand people.

The structure of the stories of Schellenberg and his former subordinate almost completely coincides. Both begin with a TASS report on the arrest of Tukhachevsky and with a certificate of relations between the Reichswehr and the Red Army, compiled by German intelligence, and Heettl sets it out in much less detail than Schellenberg (it seems that the author of the "Secret Front" did not write off from the original document, but from the manuscript of the memoirs of his former boss). Schellenberg attributes the initiative in compiling the certificate to Janke, and calls himself the author (probably, it would be more correct to say the leader of the work on its preparation). Höttl did not know who Janke was, and was in no way associated with him in the service. In connection with the certificate of Soviet-German military cooperation, he did not even want to name Schellenberg's name, so as not to betray the true source of his knowledge. Therefore, this document at Höttl became practically

anonymous.

Then General Skoblin appears on the scene, informing German intelligence about Tukhachevsky's conspiracy as a double agent.

But if Janke expresses doubts about his loyalty to Germany in Schellenberg, then in Höttl they are attributed to Heydrich himself and Behrens, whom the memoirist really knew well. Schellenberg calls not Skoblin, but his wife, an agent of the GPU, in order to somehow explain why the Germans did not release Plevitskaya after the occupation of France, convicted by a French court for her role in the kidnapping of the head of the ROVS, General E. K. Miller. Both in Höttl and Schellenberg, the decision to carry out a provocation against the Soviet military is made by Hitler and Himmler. At the same time, in addition to the main goal - to weaken the combat capability of the Red Army for the period while the Wehrmacht would solve the main problems in the West, there was an additional one - to get compromising evidence on the highest ranks of the Reichswehr. Then follows a detective story with the penetration of burglars into the archives of the Reichswehr and the theft of documents related to Tukhachevsky and his comrades. From these materials, counterfeiters prepare a false dossier that incriminates the marshal and his associates in secret ties with German military intelligence. In both memoirists, the original route by which the fake was supposed to get to Moscow appears in Czechoslovakia. However, there is a significant difference in the details of this episode. Schellenberg claims that at first they thought to use the Czechoslovak General Staff, which at that time had close relations with the headquarters of the Red Army, as a channel for transmitting the "dossier on Tukhachevsky", but then Heydrich preferred to act through Beneš's entourage, thanks to whose personal letter to Stalin the meeting took place in Berlin Heydrich's people

authorized by Yezhov.

Höttl, on the other hand, insists that the Czechoslovak version was eventually abandoned as too risky, since information could fall into the hands of Tikhachevsky or one of his friends. Therefore, in the "Secret Front" Heydrich had to go through his agents directly to the Soviet embassy in Berlin and offer him goods in the form of the notorious folder almost free of charge. At the same time, the Russians seemed to willingly agree and even out of some incomprehensible nobility expressed their desire to pay the expenses of the German side. It can be assumed that Heetl, whose sphere of official interests included Czechoslovakia, was aware that German intelligence did not really have any contacts with Beneš, and was afraid that Prague might expose the version with the alleged personal and secret letter of the Czechoslovak President to Stalin. Therefore, he preferred to force Heydrich to directly enter into contact with Soviet agents in Berlin, which, however, made the situation even more ridiculous. I wonder who Heydrich's people presented themselves at these negotiations? Who were they, that is, intelligence officers? But then why should the representatives of the Soviet security agencies have such complete confidence in their German counterparts? After all, relations between Moscow and Berlin were more than cool, and both sides considered each other as potential adversaries. Of course, German intelligence agents could pretend to be staunch anti-fascists who set out to help their beloved Soviet Union and Comrade Stalin expose the "military-fascist conspiracy." But then it is completely incomprehensible why they did not refuse to accept in compensation

for the labors of a tidy sum of three million gold rubles, knowing full well that the world's first country of socialism has a hard time with currency?

There is one more option left. The owners of the dossier could call themselves ordinary Berlin criminals, for some fantastic occasion - either by mistake (they confused the Reichswehr archive with the bank), or else as they got the material so valuable to Stalin. Well, as a plot for a crime comedy, it is very suitable. But to believe that this could happen in real life could only be either unrestrained dreamers, people not of this world, or clinical fools. Neither one nor the other main characters in this story: Heydrich, Yezhov and Stalin - certainly were not.

Most impressive of all is the final with three million rubles, either ordinary, like Höttl, or gold, like Schellenberg. It's hard to even say which option is more absurd. The ruble in the 37th has long been "wooden". So it was possible to ask for an amount in both small and large ruble bills only in one case: if they intended to spend them within the Soviet Union, that is, to supply German agents with them. Heydrich was experienced enough to understand that Yezhov would think something like this and would certainly fix the numbers of the bills being transferred or mark them with some kind of conventional sign. Nevertheless, the head of the RSHA gives the entire amount to the same Schellenberg for use in the USSR! Laughter, and nothing more.

But even more fun is the version of Schellenberg himself. If Heydrich received three million not "wooden", but gold rubles, then the payment should have been made in currency or gold. Now imagine Soviet citizens paying in 1937

year in Moscow, Leningrad or Kyiv in German marks, British pounds or US dollars, and even in large denominations! If such an idea were to visit any madman, he would remain free only as long as it would take to report the incident to the nearest policeman. There was no need to rewrite banknote numbers or mark them with special paint, since the free circulation of currency was already prohibited. Schellenberg, who conducted many intelligence operations in Russia, could not have been unaware of this. The blunder with three million most likely remained in the text of the book because death did not allow Schellenberg to complete work on his memoirs and, in particular, edit them. Hoettl, on the other hand, rather thoughtlessly wrote off an entertaining episode with three million and three agents who failed because of them (again, the sacramental number three, so dear to the human mind). And yet, at his own discretion, he equipped the trial of Tukhachevsky with a number of details taken from his head, which Schellenberg, thank God, did not have.

Hettl forced Voroshilov to make a speech at the trial, and Vyshinsky to demand the death penalty for the defendants, although neither of them were even present in the hall where the trial of the "military-fascist conspiracy" was taking place. It is possible that rumors about Voroshilov's speech at the Military Council reached the retired intelligence officer, and he mistakenly decided that Kliment Efremovich was speaking at the trial itself. Höttl moved the trial date itself by a day - to June 10, considering that it is clear that the message in Pravda should have appeared, as usual, the day after the trial.

The author of The Secret Front, without any embarrassment, borrowed from

Schellenberg's unpublished manuscript of the entire episode with Tukhachevsky. The fact that they met after the release of Schellenberg from prison in 1949, Hoettl directly hints in his book:

"Schellenberg, the former head of the German intelligence services, was a very sick man, and his sentence (to a 6-year prison term for war crimes. - B.S.) was more symbolic. He was placed in a hospital and released long before. At the invitation of the commander of the Swiss army, General Gvisan, or his chief of intelligence during the war, Colonel Masson, Schellenberg went to Switzerland, and then to Spain, where he tried to establish contact with his former colleagues, who were in much better financial conditions, than he himself, but did not find support here and went to Italy, where he began to write memoirs commissioned by a Swiss publishing house. The publishing advance was enough for Schellenberg only for life, but not for medical treatment. In the summer of 1952, there was a relapse of his disease, and Schellenberg died after operation carried out either unsuccessfully or too late"

(in fact, Schellenberg died of liver cancer after a very late surgery in March 1952; the cause of the fatal puff, however, was not Schellenberg's lack of money, but his fear of the scalpel). It is hard to doubt that one of the colleagues who visited the former head of the 6th department of the RSHA (and after the removal of Canaris in February 1944th - and all the German intelligence services) colleagues was Höttl himself, who somehow managed to get acquainted with the chapter of his memoirs about Tukhachevsky (maybe even copy it). It is no coincidence that Höttl began to write

the corresponding section of his work as early as 1952, since he speaks there of Stalin as a living person. Most likely, having learned about the death of Schellenberg (not earlier than the summer of the same year), Höttl decided to borrow such a winning episode from the deceased, hoping that Schellenberg's memoirs would not see the light of day in the foreseeable future, and not at all expecting that readers would have to compare both texts.

Thus, we found out that the version with the German dossier on Tukhachevsky, allegedly handed over to Stalin, was invented by Walter Schellenberg. You can more or less understand why he came up with it: in order to elevate the native department, to attribute to it another major success in the secret war (especially since the German special services had a big deficit for real successes during the Second World War). But the motives for Heydrich's actions, if he really organized a provocation against the Soviet marshal, look difficult to explain. Well, to remove Tukhachevsky, who is not very friendly to the Germans, from the leadership of the Red Army is, of course, a good thing. Back in 1935, his anti-German articles evoked a corresponding reaction: the German ambassador von Schulenburg expressed dissatisfaction with the people's commissar for foreign affairs, Litvinov, and the military attaché, Colonel Hartmann, said in the department of foreign relations of the General Staff of the Red Army that "he has been instructed to report on the negative effect that Tukhachevsky's article on the command of the Reichswehr". However, Schellenberg wrote that Heydrich, Hitler and others just suspected that Tukhachevsky really wanted to enlist support from Germany to carry out a military coup. Where is the logic here? And then.

There was no objective evidence of Stalin's or, say, Voroshilov's sympathy for Germany. The Germans suspected Uborevich of pro-German sentiments, but he was on the same team with Tukhachevsky! So it didn't matter to Hitler and Heydrich who would be at the head of the Red Army - Voroshilov or Tukhachevsky! After all, one person, very talented or uniquely mediocre, does not determine the combat effectiveness of the armed forces, even if he is the Minister of War. As for the long-term undermining of the power of the Red Army, then, handing over his fake to Stalin, Heydrich could not possibly expect that this would cause the extermination of most of the top command staff, and not just the removal and execution of Tukhachevsky and a dozen or two people closest to the marshal. In addition, from the point of view of weakening Germany's potential adversary, it would be much more beneficial to maintain a covert confrontation between the two clans in the leadership of the Red Army (if German intelligence heard rumors about a rather tough struggle between the Voroshilov and Tukhachevsky groups).

The German secret services did not have the information necessary to create a plausible picture of a military conspiracy about personal relationships in the upper echelons of the Soviet armed forces.

Major General Karl Shpalke, already mentioned, wrote about this honestly and very convincingly in his memoirs:

"Neither Mr. Heydrich, nor the SS, nor any party organ (National Socialists. - B. S.) were, in my opinion, in a position to cause or only plan such a coup - the fall of Tukhachevsky and his entourage. The elementary prerequisites were missing, namely knowledge of the organization of the Red Army and its leading figures. The few messages that were sent to us through "Abwehr 3" by party

the subject of verification and coming supposedly from trustworthy experts, were sent back by us almost without exception marked "absolute nonsense"!

From these reports, it was clear that the party authorities had no contacts either with the structures of the Red Army itself, or with any bodies associated with it. With such a lack of knowledge, it is unacceptable to believe that Mr. Heydrich or other party authorities could supposedly set in motion such an action as the Tikhachevsky case. To do this, they supposedly also involved statesmen of the third country of Czechoslovakia. And finally, the completely unthinkable: none of the uninitiated knew about the preparation, conduct and, as a result, the successful completion of such a grandiose operation! Hitler and the SS...

Shpalke, who was in Soviet captivity, said the same thing to state security investigators back in 1947. He claimed that, by the nature of his service, he communicated with the military leaders of the Red Army who came to Germany, but did not receive any intelligence information from them, although he once tried to do so. In the 1930s, heading the intelligence section of the General Staff "Foreign Armies - East", he never had from the military attaché in Moscow, Colonel Koestring, intelligence information from the circles of the commanders of the Red Army. Likewise, Major General O. von Niedermeier, who stood at the origins

Soviet-German military cooperation, during interrogation after the war he showed that after 1927 he had no agents in the USSR (and before 1931 he was a representative of the Reichswehr in the USSR, who oversaw joint military enterprises). By the way, Niedermeier (in the 1920s in the USSR he lived under the surname Neumann) was arrested at the end of the war for anti-fascist sentiments and ended up in a concentration camp. From there he was liberated by the Americans. But for some reason, the poor man was carried away to the Soviet occupation zone, apparently, he hoped that the fight against Hitler and conscientious cooperation with the Red Army in the 20s, which he probably hoped to resume for himself personally, would count. So it was clearly not with his hands to lie about the Tikhachevsky case. Smershevites Niedermayer arrested. In 1948, he was sentenced to 25 years in prison for espionage against the USSR (the general honestly admitted that until the 27th year he really had one agent in the Soviet Union, but in fact he turned out to be a secret employee of the OGPU). In the same year, Niedermeier died suddenly in Butyrka prison. I fear that his death was no more natural than that of the Swedish diplomat Raoul Wallenberg. I am almost sure that biochemists from the special laboratory of the MGB also worked on the death of Niedermeier, who developed poisons that give all the symptoms of sudden cardiac arrest when a person dies. The general knew too much about the secret cooperation between the Reichswehr and the Red Army, about who helped Germany prepare the necessary potential for the rapid deployment of a multi-million Wehrmacht equipped with the most modern weapons ... This knowledge in the late 40s seemed dangerous to Stalin, not without reason: after all, the Soviet propaganda laid all the blame for condoning the remilitarization of Germany on the former allies in the anti-Hitler coalition - England, America and France.

There are no traces of folders allegedly received from Heydrich with compromising Tikhachevsky and other military leaders

materials were never found in the USSR. Although they searched very persistently. It is no coincidence that Khrushchev so willingly voiced the Schellenberg-Höttl version from the congress rostrum. She suited Nikita Sergeevich quite well, since she helped to remove part of the responsibility for repression from the party. It turned out that the main fault in this case was not only on Stalin, but also on Heydrich and Hitler. Therefore, the commission created at the 20th Congress was just digging its nose into the ground in order to find some clue, even the smallest trace of the notorious dossier. In vain. Neither in the investigation, nor in the court case of Tukhachevsky and his comrades, nor in the most closed archives of the Central Committee of the CPSU and state security, did they find anything remotely resembling the materials that Schellenberg and his followers wrote about, like Höttl and Alexandrov. It could not be that Stalin and Yezhov, having paid three million for a folder with documents they needed so much and having built the accusation against Tukhachevsky primarily on alleged conspiratorial ties with the German army, did not use these documents in any way to convict the accused and convince those who participated in the The Military Council and the court of marshals and army commanders that judge real spies and conspirators. It turns out that they not only didn't use it, but either destroyed it, or hid it so securely that even a quarter of a century later you won't find it with fire in the afternoon. And the commission created by Khrushchev came to the only possible conclusion: no folder with Gestapo-made

fakes compromising Tukhachevsky and other military leaders did not exist in nature. I think any unbiased reader will subscribe to this conclusion.

When you get acquainted with the memoirs of Schellenberg and Höttl, one important detail catches your eye. All the persons mentioned in connection with the Tukhachevsky case were already dead by the time Schellenberg began work on his memoirs and, accordingly, even before the first publication of Höttl's book. Hitler committed suicide in besieged Berlin on April 30, 1945, for reliability, at the same time shooting himself and biting through an ampoule of potassium cyanide. Heydrich died three years earlier. On May 27, 1942, he was assassinated by Czech terrorists in Prague. One of the bombs tore the spleen of the imperial protector of Bohemia and Moravia. On June 4, Heydrich died in agony. On May 21, 1945, Himmler, with forged documents, fell into the hands of a British military patrol and chose to bite through an ampoule of poison. The chief of the German criminal police, Arthur Nebe, mentioned by Schellenberg, who allegedly prepared a special group to attack the archives of the Reichswehr, later turned out to be a participant in the conspiracy on July 20, 1944, then hid in the villa of his mistress, was extradited by her and hanged at the beginning of the 45th. Czechoslovak President Eduard Beneš died on September 3, 1948. SS-Brigadeführer Hermann Behrens was hanged in Belgrade in 1946. By the beginning of the 50s, the old intelligence officer Karl Janke had also died. Finally, the former White General N.V. Skoblin, from whom the whole story with Tukhachevsky allegedly began, disappeared without a trace from Paris in September 1937, after General E.K. Miller was kidnapped with his help by NKVD agents. German intelligence had practically no doubt that the owners had long dealt with Skoblin, who knew too much. So he could already be considered a dead man.

You can't say anything, after all, Schellenberg was a master of his craft, that is, he was very good at collecting and systematizing the necessary information and spreading misinformation. The former foreign intelligence chief of the Nazi Party managed to do everything so that not a single witness

could not directly refute the information he reported about the Tukhachevsky case. It turns out that the scam with a false dossier was prepared exclusively by the dead. That is, then, in 1937, all of them, of course, were alive, but by 1952-53, as if it were a sin, they had gone to another world.

And Schellenberg's version held out for several decades. The Khrushchev Commission, let's do justice to it, did not leave stone unturned on it already in 1964, but the commission's note was kept under the heading "top secret" until the early 1990s. The general public for a long time accepted the story of the gruppenführer who killed the marshal on faith. And not only the townsfolk believed, but also experienced politicians like Churchill. The reference to Beneš made the story especially convincing, since it was known that quite close relations existed between him and Stalin in the mid-1930s. But even here, the documents extracted from the archives destroyed Schellenberg's constructions.

Beneš himself, in his memoirs, published in 1947 and giving impetus to Schellenberg's fantasy, claimed that as early as the second half of January 37, he learned about the negotiations with the Germans of the "anti-Stalinist clique in the USSR - Marshal Tukhachevsky, Rykov and others." He received this information from the Czechoslovak ambassador in Berlin, V. Mastny. True, it happened

a little later than Beneš indicates. Prior to this, from the end of the 36th, Mastny negotiated with the German representatives Count Trautmansdorff and the "father of geopolitics" Albrecht Gaushofer in order to improve German-Czechoslovak relations and find an acceptable solution to the problem of the German-populated Sudetenland. At the beginning of February 37, the German side suddenly broke off negotiations. On February 9, at the direction of Beneš Mastna, he met with Trauttmansdorff and at the end of the meeting he reported:

"The real reason for the Reich Chancellor's decision to postpone the negotiations is his assumption, based on certain information he received from Russia, that an unexpected coup is soon possible there, which should lead to the elimination of Stalin and Litvinov and the establishment of a military dictatorship."

On March 20, the ambassador repeated in a telegram to the Czechoslovak Foreign Ministry that Hitler had information

"about the possibility of an unexpected and imminent coup in Russia ... and the establishment of a military dictatorship in Moscow ...".

Beneš insisted in his memoirs:

"I immediately informed the Soviet envoy in Prague, Aleksandrovsky, that I had learned from Berlin about Mastna Trautmansdorff's conversations."

However, the reports of the Soviet ambassador to Czechoslovakia S. S. Aleksandrovsky (a wave of repressions covered him after the Second World War) refute the memoirist's assertions. Here, for example, is a report on the conversation between the ambassador and the president on April 22, 1937:

"I considered it right to repeat to him the refutation of the rumors about the rapprochement between the USSR and Germany. Beneš reacted quite lively to this by asking why the USSR should not get closer to Germany. Czechoslovakia could only welcome such a rapprochement ...

Frankly, I was surprised and said that I did not understand this conversation... Beneš spoke at length about the fact that no matter what changes took place in the foreign policy of the USSR, Czechoslovakia would remain unconditionally loyal to the USSR and its obligations to it. In response to my bewilderment about what kind of changes in the foreign policy of the USSR he was talking about, Beneš said that the USSR was not only a great, but downright grandiose country, which had the most extensive and diverse interests not only in Europe, but also in Asia. Beneš imagines such a theoretical possibility, when the diversity of these interests can force the USSR to change its foreign policy, say, in relation to the same Germany or England. He has nothing concrete in mind and only wants to say that under all conditions Czechoslovakia will remain in friendship with the USSR.

Aleksandrovsky had no choice but to assure the agitated Czechoslovak president of the invariance of Soviet policy towards Prague and Berlin. On May 12, Beneš and the Soviet ambassador met briefly at a reception at the British legation. Beneš said he was "quite satisfied" with the developments in Europe and promised to invite Aleksandrovsky in a few days for a "detailed conversation." But then the news broke out about the arrest of Tukhachevsky and his trial, and the new meeting was postponed for almost two months. Meanwhile, on June 15, 1937 Aleksandrovsky reported to Moscow:

"It so happened by chance that on the day the official

TASS reports on the trial of a gang of criminals and saboteurs led by Tukhachevsky, i.e. 11. M. s. tea was organized at my embassy ... It is clear that the question of the Tukhachevsky gang overshadowed all other questions, and journalists were primarily interested in the court in Moscow ... In general, I have to say that the situation was somewhat difficult for me, since I myself am informed only from the newspapers. Before tea, I gathered the Soviet tea participants and instructed them as follows. Do not say too much, do not speculate in conversations with journalists, but strictly adhere to the already known material, which is given by some articles in Pravda about Gamarnik's suicide. On the other hand, do not digress from the topic and do not give it an exaggerated value in this way. Although on that day I was not yet aware of the Pravda article from I. UG, I gave the correct statement: this process is a symptom of the recovery of a strong organism not only of the Red Army, but of the entire Soviet state. There is no question of any crisis."

On July 3, Beneš finally received the Soviet ambassador. The next day, Aleksandrovsky sent a telegram to the NKID with a detailed recording of their conversation, which lasted two and a half hours:

"He started the conversation with a question about what I think about the significance of the trial against Tukhachevsky and the company, but after a few rather general phrases on my part, he interrupted me with a statement that he wants to explain his understanding to me in detail in order to make it clear to me what motives he is guided by in his policy towards the USSR... The so-called events in the USSR did not surprise him in the least and did not frighten him at all, for he had been expecting them for a long time. victory and regards it as a strengthening of the might of the USSR, as a victory for the supporters of the defense of peace and cooperation between the Soviet state and Europe...

Benes stated that in recent years he regards Soviet foreign policy as the USSR's stake on Western European democracy of the French, English and Czechoslovak types, as an ally in the fight against fascism for peace ...

Beneš stated that he imagined relying on the USSR of the Stalinist regime, and not on Russia and not on democratic Russia, as he was suspected of in Moscow ... Starting from 1932, he devoted all his time to a decisive battle between the Stalinist line and line of "radical revolutionaries" (the latter meant Trotsky and his supporters. B.S.). Therefore, the latest Moscow trials, including the Tukhachevsky trial, were not a surprise to him ...

Benes emphasized that, in his opinion, in the Moscow trials, especially in the Tukhachevsky trial, it was not about spies and sabotage at all, but about direct and clear conspiratorial activity in order to overthrow the existing system. Beneš said that he understood that it was undesirable "for tactical reasons" to emphasize precisely this sense of events. He himself, they say, would also prefer under similar conditions "to reduce the matter only to espionage."

Tukhachevsky, Yakir, Putna (Benesh almost always named only these three), of course, were not spies, but they were conspirators. Tukhachevsky was a nobleman, an officer, he had friends in official circles not only in Germany, but also in France (from the time of joint captivity in

Germany and Tukhachevsky's attempts to escape). Tukhachevsky was not and could not be the Russian Napoleon. But Benes is well aware that the listed qualities of 'Tukhachevsky, plus his German traditions, reinforced during the Soviet period by contacts with the Reichswehr, could make him very accessible to German influence in the Hitler period. Tukhachevsky could be completely unaware that he was committing a crime by supporting contact with the Reichswehr. Especially if we imagine that Tukhachevsky saw the only salvation of the Motherland in a war hand in hand with Germany against the rest of Europe, in a war that remained the only means of causing a world revolution, then one can even imagine that Tukhachevsky seemed to himself not a traitor, but even a savior Motherland ... Benes told me the following in great secrecy: during Tukhachevsky's stay in France last year, Tukhachevsky had conversations of a completely private nature with his personal French friends. These conversations are precisely known to the French government, and from the latter to Benesch. In these conversations, Tukhachevsky very seriously developed the theme of the possibility of Soviet-German cooperation under Hitler, so to speak, the theme of the "new Rapallo." Beneš claims that these conversations have somewhat disturbed France... Beneš, by the way, said that a number of persons could be guided by such motives as dissatisfaction with the position, thirst for glory, unprincipled adventurism, etc. In this connection, he mentioned Yakir again and Putnu. Beneš knows about the last one that he was near Warsaw with his 27th division and, obviously,

"could not come to terms with the fact that the glory of the conqueror of Warsaw eluded him"...

Benes was confident in the victory of the "Stalinist regime" precisely because this regime had not lost morality, while the screamers about

the permanent revolution was clearly not on a moral high ground. Traitors are shot in Moscow, and so on. the European world is horrified. This is hypocrisy. Benes not only perfectly understands, but directly approves of the Moscow course of action. Moscow continues to live in the era of revolution...

Beneš reminded me that in a conversation with me... he said that why shouldn't the USSR come to an agreement with Germany? I replied that I remember, and admitted that I was then very surprised by this part of the conversation, as it completely fell outside the framework of Beneš's usual kind of thoughts. Laughing slyly, Beneš replied that he could now explain to me the hidden meaning of his conversation. Benes asked that his explanations be considered strictly secret and then told the following: since January of this year, Benes received indirect signals about the great proximity between the Reichswehr and the Red Army. Since January, he has been waiting to see how this will end. Mastna's Czechoslovakian envoy in Berlin is an exceptionally accurate informant... Mastna had two conversations in Berlin with prominent (meaning: high-ranking - B.S.) representatives of the Reichswehr... Beneš even doubts whether these representatives of the Reichswehr were aware that they reveal their secret. But for Beneš it became clear from these conversations that there was close contact between the Reichswehr and the Red Army. Benes could not know that this contact was with traitors. For him, the problem arose of what to do if the Soviet government really returned to some kind of policy of the "new

Rapallo". In this regard, Beneš asked a rhetorical question, where is the means to protect Czechoslovakia, and answered this question bluntly that then Czechoslovakia would also have to conclude an agreement with Germany. This would be the beginning of Czechoslovak dependence, but there was no other way out. Hitler does not at all seek to physically destroy Czechoslovakia immediately, but he wants an "alliance" with it. In Czechoslovak language, this would mean dependence, a vassal state, and Beneš did not spend so many years freeing himself from the Austrian yoke in order to accept the German Beneš said that Moscow should evaluate these statements of his most seriously and understand once and for all that Czechoslovakia wants to be free in the full sense of the word. It will never accept any dictate, but it will fight for its freedom, for democracy, for European Insofar as this is also the task of the USSR, insofar as Czechoslovakia is unconditionally an ally of Moscow, insofar as Beneshev's policy accepts as an axiom the immutability of Soviet-Czechoslovak friendly relations. No executions, no internal changes can shake this friendship. In this regard, Beneš asked himself the following question: what would have happened if not Stalin, but Tukhachevsky, had won in Moscow. Then Czechoslovakia would be forced to remain on friendly terms with Tukhachevsky's Russia. But then Czechoslovakia would be forced to reach an agreement with Germany, and this again would be the beginning of dependence either on Russia or on Germany. Most likely from Germany, because Tukhachevsky's Russia would not hesitate to pay Germany with Czechoslovakia. Beneš values precisely the "current USSR", the "Stalinist regime", because he does not lay claim to Czechoslovakia and its freedom. In conclusion, Benes reiterated that he regards the Moscow trials as a sign of the strengthening of the USSR and his concept of friendship with the USSR has been and remains the main basis of Czechoslovakia's foreign policy behavior.

Now everything is falling into place. The people of Heydrich never handed over any dossier on Tukhachevsky to the people of Beneš. Trauttmansdorf with

It would be very difficult to do this with a Gaushofer. What would they, in fact, say to the Czechoslovak ambassador Mastny: here in Moscow a pro-German coup is being prepared, but out of love for the Czech brothers we decided to hand over all the documents on this issue to you, maybe send Stalin to Moscow, he will thank you? But even in some more complicated way, through persons whom Beneš had to trust, the Germans did not transfer any "red folder" to the Czechoslovak president, and he, of course, did not write any personal letters to Stalin on this matter. Hitler decided to use the information received from General Skoblin in a completely different way.

Probably the Fuhrer did not believe that Tukhachevsky was really plotting a military coup, and even in favor of Germany. Otherwise, I would not have begun to bring them to Beneš so quickly. He simply hoped that rumors about the imminent overthrow of Stalin and the pro-Czech people's commissar for foreign affairs M. M. Litvinov would make Benes much more accommodating in negotiations with Germany. Beneš did not even think of giving information about the conspiracy to Stalin, but preferred to wait.

In March, information about a future military coup in Moscow came already from France with reference to Russian emigrants, that is, in fact, to the same Skoblin. So, on March 16, 1937, the Soviet

Plenipotentiary representative in Paris V.P. Potemkin sent his telegram outlining his conversation with the French Minister of Defense Edouard Daladier to three addressees at once: Stalin, Molotov and Litvinov. It said:

"From an allegedly serious French source, he recently learned about the calculations of German circles to prepare a coup d'état in the USSR with the assistance of elements hostile to the current Soviet system from the command staff of the Red Army ... Daladier added that the same information about Germany's plans was received by the War Ministry from Russian émigré circles ... Daladier explained that he did not yet have more specific information, but that he considered it a "duty of friendship" to convey to us his information, which might be of some use to us."

There is no doubt that Benes received similar messages at the same time from both French friends and Czechoslovak intelligence.

Potemkin was very skeptical about Daladier's words:

"Of course, I thanked Daladier, but expressed strong doubts about the seriousness of his source, reporting information about the participants in the representatives of the Red Army command in the German conspiracy against the USSR and later against France. At the same time, I noted that the lack of specificity of the messages received only confirms my doubts Daladier replied that if he received more complete data, he would immediately inform me of them. He still does not exclude the possibility that there are remnants of Trotskyists in the Red Army. This part of the conversation made an ambivalent impression on me. Firstly, Daladier clearly is interested in inspiring us with his "friendly" messages to inspire us with more confidence in himself. Secondly, he involuntarily betrays the usual fear of the French, no matter how we conspire against them with the Germans. "

Of the three addressees of the telegram, the ambassador sent a message about the alleged

The pro-German coup d'état being prepared by the top commanders of the Red Army could really frighten only the uninitiated Litvinov. Especially since the words of the French minister about the "remnants of Trotskyism" almost literally coincided with Voroshilov's statements at the recent plenum of the Central Committee. Stalin and Molotov themselves were the authors of the intrigue against Tukhachevsky and were not at all agitated by the information about the imaginary conspiracy. With their sanction, back in August 1936, Yezhov began the final stage of the operation against Tukhachevsky, arresting Primakov and Pugna. And it is no coincidence that soon after that, in September, Skoblin told his partners from German intelligence about an allegedly ripening military conspiracy. This information, according to the plan of the leaders of the NKVD, should have been confirmed in a few months at the Tukhachevsky trial. Thus, the value of the double agent in the eyes of the same Heydrich would have increased, which would have made it possible in the future to more confidently launch any necessary disinformation through Skoblin. The spread of rumors in Germany, France, Czechoslovakia and other European countries about the preparation of a coup d'etat in the USSR was intended both to prepare public opinion for the future disclosure of the "military-fascist conspiracy" and to obtain "evidence" against Tukhachevsky, Yakir and others in the form of received from abroad "reliable" information (in reality - only a reflection of the KGB disinformation) about their supposedly criminal ties with

the German military.

But Benes was frightened in earnest. After all, information about the conspiracy in the USSR now came, as it were, from two independent sources - in Germany and in France. So it's a serious matter. What if the preparations for the coup have gone so far, and it has covered such a large part of the commanders of the Red Army, that it is no longer possible to prevent the development of events unfavorable for Czechoslovakia? Therefore, Benes did not tell Stalin anything, but preferred to make it clear to the Soviet ambassador in Prague that he would remain loyal to the USSR even if the Soviet leaders came up with the fantasy of making friends with Hitler. Don't leave me, I'll still come in handy... After all, if two giants, Moscow and Berlin, can come to an agreement at the expense of the dwarf - Prague (and at the same time, probably, Warsaw), then the independence of Czechoslovakia will have to be forgotten for a long time. The Sudetenland will certainly go to Germany, and the Carpathian Ukraine-Rus (perhaps together with Slovakia) to the Soviet Union. And what remains of the Czechoslovak state will depend entirely on the will of the two dictators. From such a prospect, one could lose one's head. And from the outside, when you read Beneš's conversation with Aleksandrovsky today, the Czechoslovak president looks very pathetic. Aleksandrovsky, who in April 1937 knew nothing about the rumors about Tukhachevsky's conspiracy, was surprised and shocked by the behavior of his interlocutor. When the trial and execution of the alleged conspirators took place, Beneš experienced a feeling of deep relief. And in a new conversation with Aleksandrovsky at the beginning of July, he was ready to approve all the most cruel executions and judicial farces sewn with white thread in the USSR, the most severe suppression of democracy by Stalin. If only he retained the anti-German orientation of Soviet foreign policy and the inevitable alliance with Czechoslovakia under such conditions. Only now Beneš could not honestly admit to Aleksandrovsky that information about a military conspiracy was obtained during secret German-Czechoslovak negotiations - he would have been reasonably suspected of a double game. Therefore, it was necessary to invent two mythical German military men, with whom the Czechoslovak ambassador allegedly met in Berlin. And the very moment of receiving information should be moved from February to January, during a break in negotiations

Mastny with Trautmansdorff, so that in case Soviet intelligence did find out about them, there was no reason to believe that information about the Tukhachevsky conspiracy was obtained during these negotiations.

However, the experienced diplomat Alexandrovsky figured out Beneš's game. In a personal letter to People's Commissar Litvinov, sent on July 13, 1937, shortly after a conversation with one of Beneš's closest associates, Laurin, and simultaneously with a recording of a conversation with the president on July 3, he revealed the meaning of the main steps of Czechoslovak diplomacy in recent months:

"As far as I remember, the intensified talk about the possibility of a Czechoslovak-German rapprochement, and in particular the conversations of Laurin, in which he claimed that Beneš himself was looking for an opportunity to negotiate with Germany, date back to the beginning of this year, mainly to February and March (actually, German Czechoslovak negotiations have been going on since the end of 1936. - B.S.) ... My last conversation with Benes ... it seems to me that it leaves no doubts that the Czechs really had an indirect signal from Berlin that that between the Reichswehr and the Red Army there is some special intimate connection (here "intimate",

of course, only in the meaning of "close, trusting." - B.S.) and close cooperation. Of course, neither Beneš, nor anyone else could have guessed that this alarm signaled the betrayal of such major leaders of the Red Army as the traitors Gamarnik, Tukhachevsky and others. Therefore, I can easily imagine what Beneš did from these signals, the conclusion is that the Soviet government as a whole is playing a double game and is preparing a surprise for the world by means of an agreement with Germany. In Beneš's position, it was quite natural to ask then what Czechoslovakia should do in the face of such an opportunity ... I have no doubt that Beneš and Kroft (Minister of Foreign Affairs. Czechoslovakia. - B.S.) really probed the soil with the Germans, met with Trauttmansdorff and used their envoy Mastny in Berlin in order to clear the way for a Czecho-Slovak-German agreement, and Beneš had in mind to run ahead and negotiate with Germany before the "surprise" of the Soviet-German rapprochement that he expected became would be a well-known fact. At the same time, he instructed Laurin to signal through me that he could come to an agreement with Germany before the USSR did, and thereby compel us, if not to speak frankly with him, then to take into account such a possibility in advance in pacting with Germany. If the Soviet government really prepared an agreement with Germany, then such a plan by Benes would be quite understandable and would achieve its results. I consider it very characteristic what Benes said to me now, namely, that Czechoslovakia would have to "rely on Tukhachevsky's Russia" and also come to an agreement with Germany, although this would be the beginning of Czechoslovakia's dependence on Germany.

Everything is good in this in its own way brilliant analysis. There is only one surprise. For some reason, neither Beneš nor Alexandrovsky asked the elementary question: why, if a pro-German conspiracy in the Red Army really existed, did Hitler so hastily organize the leak of this information to Prague? Wouldn't it have been safer to wait for the outcome of the coup? Indeed, in case of success, Czechoslovakia from Germany would still not have gone anywhere. And then there is the risk that the information will somehow reach Stalin and he will have time to take action. Now, if the Fuhrer was bluffing, then his behavior could easily be explained. But also

the president and the ambassador then did not doubt that Tukhachevsky led a very real conspiracy, and did not think about the facts that did not fit into this scheme.

Benes hoped that Moscow would not want to deprive his country of independence and eliminate democratic freedoms there. A year later, it turned out with the little fellow, however, that Hitler was able to come to an agreement about Czechoslovakia not with Stalin, but with the leaders of Western democracies - the same Daladier and Chamberlain in Munich. Benes finally learned the price of Stalinist friendship ten years after Munich, in February 1948. As one of the leaders of Soviet intelligence and ober-terrorist General P. A. Sudoplatov recalls:

"Molotov (at that time in charge of intelligence. - B.S.) called me to his Kremlin office and ordered me to go to Prague and, having organized a secret meeting with Benes, Offer him to leave his post with dignity, transferring power to Gottwald, the leader of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia. To remind Beneš of his close unofficial ties to the Kremlin,

I had to show him a receipt for ten thousand dollars, signed by his secretary in 1938, when Benes and his people needed this money to move to Great Britain. Otherwise, I was instructed to tell him that we would find a way to organize a leak of rumors about the circumstances of his flight from the country and the financial assistance provided to him for this, a secret agreement on cooperation between Czech and Soviet intelligence, signed in 1935 in Moscow, a secret agreement on the transfer to us Carpathian Ukraine and about the participation of Benes himself in the preparation of a political coup in 1938 and an attempt on the life of the Prime Minister of Yugoslavia ...

The official Soviet representatives already exerted very strong pressure on Beneš, and here we also had to make our contribution. Zubov (a former Soviet resident in Czechoslovakia. - B.S.) and I spent a whole week in Prague, and during this time Zubov, who met with Benes before the war in the presence of our ambassador Aleksandrovsky, succeeded, using all his skill and past connections, to meet with Benes at his residence for fifteen minutes... He conveyed the meaning of our message to the president, saying that cardinal changes would take place in the country regardless of whether the current leadership would remain or not, but, in his opinion, Benes was the only one who could to ensure a smooth and bloodless transfer of power. As instructed, Zubov told Beneš that he was not expecting a response from him, but merely passing him an unofficial message. According to Zubov, Beneš seemed like a broken, sick man who would try to do everything he could to avoid an explosion of violence and unrest in Czechoslovakia... A month later, Beneš peacefully ceded the reins to Gottwald."

The Moor has done his job - the Moor must go. Beneš's calculations that Stalin would agree to tolerate him as a Soviet puppet collapsed. Moscow had a more reliable puppet - Klement Gottwald. And there was no need to show compromising evidence (however, Beneš always remembered its existence, and he was no longer delusional about the nobility of Stalin and Molotov at the time of the conversation with Zubov). Soon the retired Czechoslovak president died suddenly. Didn't Sudoplatov's colleagues from the special "laboratory-X" of Professor Mairanovsky, who supplied the knights of the cloak and dagger with deadly poisons that left no traces, put their hands on his death? Still

Beneš knew too much about secret Soviet-Czechoslovak ties. Only the case of Tukhachevsky, this, perhaps fatal, awareness is not concerned.

And the last, connected with the "red folder" on Tukhachevsky allegedly sent to Stalin through Benes. Brigadeführer Behrens, who allegedly played a key role in this whole story, was a prisoner of the British before he was extradited to Tito. Wouldn't he have told British intelligence the sensational news: the conviction of Tukhachevsky, Yakir, Uborevich and others was the result of a provocation by German intelligence? He didn't tell at least in the hope that they would be interested in him and, as a valuable witness, they would not be sent to certain death in Belgrade (they could have been torn to pieces there without bringing them to the courtroom and the gallows) ... But Berens did not say anything like that in captivity. He probably attracted Schellenberg not only because he had been dead for a long time, but also because of a suitable biography. First head of the Berlin Security Service

really could be used by Heydrich for such a responsible and secret task as fabricating a dossier on Tukhachevsky ... but only if this dossier existed in reality, and was not the fruit of Schellenberg's rich creative imagination.

What did Stalin and Yezhov actually have regarding Tukhachevsky's connections with the German, Japanese and other foreign armies and intelligence services? The most serious, at first glance, looks like a document obtained by the Main Directorate of State Security of the NKVD in April 1937. The document was in Japanese and was a letter from the Japanese military attache in Poland, Sawada Shiger, to the Chief of the Main Directorate of the General Staff of the Land of the Rising Sun, Nakajima Tetsuzo. For some reason, Shigeru's assistant, Arao, wrote the letter by hand. The text of the document read:

"On establishing contact with a prominent Soviet figure. April 12, 1937. Military attache in Poland Sawad Siger. On the issues indicated in the title, it was possible to establish contact with the secret envoy of Marshal of the Red Army Tukhachevsky. The essence of the conversation was to discuss (further two the interpreter of the NKVD failed to read the hieroglyph and one sign. - B.S.) regarding the secret envoy from the Red Army known to you No. 304.

This letter was photographed by Yezhov's people during the transportation of diplomatic mail from Poland to Japan through Soviet territory. The photo quality was poor. Therefore, part of the text could not be read.

On April 20, Yezhov reported the interception to Voroshilov, who the next day to Stalin. It is curious that in order to translate such an interesting document, I had to turn to ... shortly before this, on April 2, R.N. Kim, a former employee of the Foreign Department of the NKVD, who was arrested on suspicion of spying for Japan, was the greatest expert in the Japanese language. He was lucky to survive, and in the 60s he testified to the Commission of the PC. Kim said that for deciphering the document, he was promised a significant relief from his fate. The picture was very blurry, and it was possible to translate the text only at the cost of great efforts. According to Kim, the letter was on the letterhead of the military attaché and was written not by Shiger himself, but by his assistant Arao, whose handwriting the former NKVD officer knew very well, since he had previously translated many of the documents he had executed. At the same time with

With the text of the translation, Kim presented a written conclusion that the document was fake and planted by the Japanese with a provocative purpose. He believed, not without reason, that such important and secret information, directly related to the Red Army, would not have been transported in unencrypted form through Soviet territory without a diplomatic courier, simply in a sealed bag with diplomatic mail, with which it was still unknown what would happen on the way (and indeed happened: the NKVD regularly seized the Japanese diplomatic mail and read it as if it were their own). Kim was sure that if the Japanese wanted to reliably hide the contents of the document from the eyes of Soviet intelligence, they would have transmitted it in cipher or with a diplomatic courier. And in this case, Japanese intelligence had a different goal: to bring the contents of the document to the attention of the Soviet side. Perhaps, in this way they wanted to check whether the Japanese diplomatic mail is really being perused.

Most likely, the Japanese note about Tukhachevsky was nothing more than

return to Moscow in a somewhat modified form of rumors spread by Skoblin on the instructions of the NKVD. It seems that this was the only real version of the German "dossier" that did not exist in nature, as if worked out on the instructions of Heydrich. That Tukhachevsky was not a Japanese agent is proved by the report of Kootani, assistant military attache of Japan in Moscow, who spoke in July 37 with an analysis of the Tukhachevsky case before the political and military elite of the Land of the Rising Sun. He rightly stated:

"It is wrong to consider the execution of Tukhachevsky and several other leaders of the Red Army as the result of an anti-Stalinist movement that broke out in the army. It will be right to see this phenomenon as arising from the purge work carried out by Stalin for some time, penetrating the entire country."

Yezhov quickly realized that this was disinformation. That is why Ulrich Tukhachevsky did not impute work for Japanese intelligence at the trial. And they did not write about it in the newspapers, so that the Japanese would not understand that the Chekists had read the message of Shigeru Tetsuzo. But Tukhachevsky's confession in ties with the Japanese General Staff was retroactively included in the transcript - as a preparation for the future.

By the way, the story of the letter from the Japanese military attache from Warsaw is another proof that Ezhov and Stalin never received the German folder with compromising evidence on Tukhachevsky. Even if a short letter on one page left a note in the archives and in the memory of the surviving witnesses (besides Kim, the former Chekist M.E. Sokolov, who directly handed over the document to Kim, and those people who directly took the letter out of the mail car) spoke about it), the voluminous folder, all the more, could not evaporate in the air.

The second kind of analogue of Heydrich's "red folder" is the denunciations of Tukhachevsky by one of the architects of the "Trust" operation, the former head of the Foreign Department of the NKVD (that is, intelligence), and then the deputy head of the Intelligence Directorate of the Red Army A. Kh. Artuzov. Back in late 1932, an agent from Germany nicknamed "Surprise" reported, with reference to the representative of the Abwehr, Hermann von Berg, that there was a "military party" in the USSR that was preparing for the "big historical task" - "to take on the role of the savior of the fatherland at the right time in the form of a strong and authoritative military dictatorship." The agent reported:

"Berg calls the ideological head of this trend" General Turdeev ". Turdeev, allegedly a former tsarist officer of about 46 years old, this year (1932) came to Germany for maneuvers. Turdeev in Voroshilov's headquarters is one of the most responsible organizers of the Red Army. Turdeev is in great friendship with Niedermeier, with whom he is on "you. Berg says that Turdeev impressed him as a certain nationalist."

In other reports, the surname of the general varied: Turgalov, Turgulov, Turguev ... The OGPU quickly established that Tukhachevsky traveled to Germany as General Turguev.

Later, in the spring of 1933, due to the death of one intermediary agent, the connection of Soviet intelligence with Surprise was interrupted forever. But the story of "General Turguev" continued. In January 1937, for a number of major failures of his agents, Artuzov was removed from his post as deputy head of the Intelligence Department of the Red Army and remained unemployed for some time, and

then he was returned to the NKVD as an ordinary employee of one of the departments of the Main Directorate of State Security. Feeling that the ring around him was closing (many of his friends and relatives were arrested), Artur Khristianovich tried to use the old proven method of salvation: to redeem his neck with other people's heads. On January 25, 1937, Artuzov sent a note to Yezhov, in which he outlined the old reports of Surprise about the "military party". The disgraced Chekist attached to the note a "List of former employees of the Intelligence Agency who took an active part in Trotskyism", with 34 names. On the note the next day, the people's commissar imposed a resolution favorable to the author:

"Comrades. Kursk and Leplevsky. This material must be taken into account. Undoubtedly, there is a Trotskyist organization in the army."

But nothing could save the informer. On the night of May 13, Artuzov was arrested. For two weeks he denied that he was a longtime agent of German and Polish intelligence, and on May 27, unable to withstand intense interrogations, he confessed.

About Tukhachevsky he stated the following:

"Steinbokzh (an NKVD worker. - B. S.) began to assure that if we did not extradite the 270th (the agent through whom contact was maintained with Surprise. - B. S.), the Germans would destroy us. We had to extradite To agree on the 270th.. This was a severe blow for the USSR, because back in 1932, from his reports, we learned about the existence of a broad military organization in the USSR, connected with the Reichswehr and working for the Germans. , there was a Soviet general Turguev - under this surname Tukhachevsky traveled to Germany.

The next interrogation of Artur Khristianovich took place after the execution of the participants in the "military-fascist conspiracy", on June 15. He obediently confirmed the nonsense announced at the trial of Tukhachevsky:

"..Yagoda opened his cards more and more, and in the end it became known to me that Rykov, Bukharin and Tomsy were at the head of the anti-Soviet conspiracy, and Tukhachevsky represented the military. Their main goal was to restore capitalism in the USSR. They wanted

to restore all kinds of foreign concessions, to bring the Soviet currency to the international market, to abolish restrictions on the entry and exit of foreigners, to announce a free choice of forms of land use - from a collective farm to an individual farm. Then - a broad amnesty for political prisoners, freedom of speech, press, assembly and, of course, free democratic elections."

The program, let's agree, is not so absurd and strongly resembles the one carried out in Russia in the last years of perestroika and the first years of independence. The trouble, however, is that the good-hearted wishes for free democratic elections and amnesty for political prisoners existed only in the fantasy of the investigators and the defendant, having nothing to do with the true views of Bukharin and Yagoda, Rykov and Tukhachevsky ... And about the alliance of the conspirators with Germany, Artuzov's fantasy played out with might and main:

"The goal of the conspirators was to achieve such a relationship between Germany and the USSR, in which the Germans would refuse an armed attack on the Soviet Union after the seizure of power by the conspirators. Hitler agreed to this, however, on the condition that the Germans living in the USSR would be provided with the right

extraterritoriality, that German industrialists will be able to have concessions, that we will not object if the Wehrmacht takes Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. If these conditions are met, then Hitler even promised help in carrying out the tasks of the anti-Soviet conspiracy.

For some reason, no one caught the eye of the idiocy of the behavior of those who allegedly were preparing a military coup. Why, I wonder, did the leaders of the Red Army have to ask Hitler for permission to overthrow Stalin? And why should Hitler suddenly solemnly promise to renounce an attack on the Soviet Union, if he has neither the strength nor the means for such an attack? And how can Germany help the conspirators to overthrow Stalin? Is it possible that the Wehrmacht divisions will be transferred by air to Moscow?

Artuzov later wrote in blood on a prison receipt that he had never been a German spy. And he cited a number of proofs, in particular, that any German agent in his place "would take care to obtain through the Germans some kind of transit document for going abroad." No attention was paid to this. August 21, 1937 Arthur Khristianovich was shot.

But what was the "Surprise" agent who reported on "General Turdeev" like? It was a German citizen Adolf Khairovsky, a native of Austria and a Croat by origin. From 1931 he was an intelligence agent of the Reichswehr in Yugoslavia and Albania, and in 1932, shortly before the recruitment of the OGPU, he became a freelance aviation expert in the Abwehr. In Moscow, from the very beginning, Khairovsky's reports were treated with great distrust, since the reports about the method of obtaining materials and the materials themselves were "hardly plausible" and more like "chatter". One of the employees of the Soviet residency in Germany, nicknamed "Erich", wrote about the information about the "military party":

"How can Surprise, who did not work directly in Abwehr, find out the real names of agents in a foreign country just like that?

admit that things are so badly organized in the Abwehr that "Surprise", who is only an expert on aviation affairs, does not even receive ... a salary (only for certain assignments), an Austrian who became a German subject a few years ago, can so easily from individual employees to learn such confidential data..."

Agent A-270, whom Artuzov referred to in his testimony and through whom the only contact with Surprise was maintained, was suspected by the OGPU of working for German intelligence. It was, like Khairovsky, an Austrian, Baron Kurt von Posanner, a member of the National Socialist Party of Germany. Even before Hitler came to power, he was an intelligence officer of the NSDAP (the Schellenberg department later grew out of it). In 1931, Posanner himself appeared at the Soviet embassy in Berlin and offered his services to the OGPU. He motivated his decision with a desire to take revenge on the party leadership, from whom he fell out of favor. It seems that the Austrian baron has opened a list of avenging defectors. Later, he was replenished with Colonel Oleg Penkovsky, who took revenge on the leadership of the GRU for not making him a general, and high-ranking CIA officer Aldrich Ames, who took revenge on his superiors, as he claimed, for inertness and unwillingness to use advanced methods of work. And the fate of Posanner

was as sad as that of Penkovsky and Ames. On March 33, A-270 was arrested by the German police, released a few days later, and immediately after liberation, was killed under mysterious circumstances. The corpse of Posanner, severely disfigured and with several stab and gunshot wounds, was found in a forest near Potsdam.

The circumstances of the death of the A-270 suggest that he did not play a double game with Soviet intelligence. Although, obviously, he was most concerned about getting money at any cost. The same "Erich", as it seems, rightly suspected Pozanner of financial

uncleanliness:

"The guy is impudently lying. He didn't give money to Surprise, but he doesn't have the necessary self-control when sticking a fake receipt to us ... He lied today not only in connection with money, but in general, telling me when I asked why there was nothing interesting, what Konrad, Rosing and Stelze - all three fell ill, which deprives "Surprise" of the opportunity to see them ... I once again ... confirm my opinion: do not delay the A-270 anymore ... if he is not a provocateur today, but just a petty swindler, he will also become a provocateur because of the colossal greed for money. An operation to check Pozanner was developed, but they did not have time to carry it out. Most likely, the counterintelligence of the Reichswehr established that the baron was connected with the OGPU, and decided to remove the traitor. It is possible that before that, disinformation was transmitted to Moscow through Pozanner, including about Tukhachevsky, and that Khairovsky-Surprise just played the role of a double agent, helping to expose A-270. Then the subsequent disappearance of "Surprise" from the field of view of Soviet intelligence and the complete fantasy of his reports about "General Turdeev" are quite understandable.

However, it cannot be ruled out that Khairovsky was not a double agent, but simply inflated his worth (in the literal sense, increasing fees), reporting information based on rumors and his own conjectures, but allegedly related to the highest-ranking German agents in the USSR . But in any case, then, in 1932-1933, the leaders of the OGPU considered the reports of Surprise and A-270 about Tukhachevsky as reflecting earlier

Legendary data in connection with Operation Trust. And no measures were taken against the future marshal. And in 1937, the reports of "Surprise" did not appear in his investigative file. Yezhov did not even need to create some kind of more or less plausible picture of the espionage and conspiratorial activities of the imaginary conspirators. It was easier to get from the detainees confirmation of what was invented by the investigators.

Information about Tukhachevsky's connections with the German military was also transmitted by the Gestapo agent, the German journalist Karl Wittig, who had previously openly sympathized with Czechoslovakia and had extensive connections in Prague. On instructions from the Security Service of the Nazi Party (SD), he informed his Czech friends in July 1936 that a secret connection remained between the Reichswehr and the Red Army, despite the formal termination of cooperation in 1933, and that Tukhachevsky supported this connection on the part of the Russians. However, here we were not talking about some kind of relationship secret from the Soviet government, and even more so directed against it. The purpose of such disinformation was obvious to frighten the Czechs with the duplicity of Moscow, behind the back of a partner in a mutual assistance pact, continuing secret cooperation with Berlin, not

hiding intentions to annex part of Czechoslovak territory. This story also had no basis in reality. Similar information a few months later, as we saw, scared Beneš to death. Almost all the people connected in one way or another with the Tukhachevsky case survived the marshal for a short time and died, as a rule, not of their own death. General Skoblin did not have long to enjoy the confidence of German intelligence, won thanks to the report on the "Tukhachevsky conspiracy." On September 23, 1937, Soviet agents kidnapped the head of the ROVS, General E. K. Miller, from Paris (two years later he was shot in the Lubyanka basement). But the old general left a note where he indicated that he was going to a meeting with a representative of German intelligence along with Skoblin, in which he suspects a Soviet agent. After the disappearance of Miller, Skoblin managed to deceive his colleagues from the Russian All-Military Union and escape. But he didn't get far. Here is what Sudoplatov said:

"The newspaper Pravda first wrote about Skoblin as an agent of the Gestapo in 1937. The article was agreed with the intelligence leadership and published in order to divert attention from accusations of Soviet intelligence involvement in the abduction of General Miller ... The only mention in the Skoblin case is a reference to his deceitful maneuver, with the help of which he managed to lure Miller to a safe house ... where he was supposed to meet with German intelligence officers. There he was detained ... Skoblin fled from Paris to Spain by plane ... He died during air raid on Barcelona...

The only thing that causes some doubt is that Skoblin died from a Francoist bomb. There are other versions as well. V. Alexandrov, in his essentially fictional book, cites a terrible story of how, in the port of Barcelona, a man who looked like Skoblin was forcibly loaded on board a Soviet ship bound for Odessa. And since then, no one has seen the former general. I think that, in fact, Sudoplatov is right when he claims that Skoblin died in Barcelona, and Aleksandrov when he hints that his Chekist masters helped him go to a better world. Nikolai Vasilyevich knew quite a lot, and after he appeared in Miller's note, he was no longer of any value as an agent. Take him to the Soviet Union for interrogations and

there was no point in subsequent liquidation. After all, Skoblin, with all his desire, could not tell anything new and important. But Spain, engulfed in civil war, was a much more suitable place to eliminate a failed agent. Barcelona was often bombed by the aircraft of the rebellious General Franco and the German Condor legion supporting him. Most likely, one of Sudoplatov's colleagues during one of the raids helped General Skoblin leave the sinful earth in the old proven way - a shot in the back of the head. And the corpse was then written off to enemy aircraft.

Marshal Blucher was arrested on October 22, 1938 on charges of conspiracy and spying for Japan. The shocked marshal denied everything at first. Then they began to methodically beat him (Tukhachevsky was more fortunate in this respect - he seemed not to be beaten). The former doctor of the Lefortovo prison, Rosenblum, recalled that when she assisted the arrested Blucher, there were profuse bruises on the marshal's face, there was a large bruise under his eye, and the blow was so strong that an eye hemorrhage occurred, Vasily

Konstantinovich told the "hen" cellmate:

"Physical impact... As if nothing hurts, but in fact everything hurts."

When the investigators, in the presence of Beria, beat Blucher with rubber truncheons, the unfortunate marshal shouted:

"Stalin, do you hear how they torture me?"

As a result, Blucher admitted his connection with the "right-wing Trotskyist organization", that is, with the same "military-fascist conspiracy" of Tukhachevsky, the participants of which he himself condemned to death a year and a half earlier. But Vasily Konstantinovich stubbornly refused to admit that he was a Japanese spy. The interrogations "with prejudice" continued. On November 9, 1938, the shoulder masters overdid it: Blucher died from blockage of the pulmonary artery by a thrombus formed in the veins of the pelvis. Probably, the same beatings would have awaited Tukhachevsky, had he not confessed quickly enough. But Mikhail Nikolayevich pretty soon came to the conclusion that his fate was sealed, and did not waste time.

Another of the judges of Tukhachevsky, commander N. D. Kashirin, being arrested on August 19, 1937, just over two months after he himself was a member of the Special Presence, wrote to Yezhov that then, on June 11, he "felt like a defendant and not a judge." He was also drawn into the "Tukhachevsky conspiracy" and shot a year later, on June 14, 1938.

Against the former Chief of Staff of the Red Army, Marshal A. I. Yegorov, who approved the reprisal against Tukhachevsky and his comrades at the Military Council, they used the same technique as against Mikhail Nikolayevich. Yegorov's wife T. A. Tseshkovskaya was declared a Polish spy and arrested. On January 25, 1938, Marshal was removed from his post and sent to command the Transcaucasian Military District. At the same time, the Politburo resolution stated that he "tried to establish contact with the conspirators through Tukhachevsky", and also "decided to organize his own anti-party group, in which he involved comrade Dybenko and tried to involve comrade Budyonny in it" Yegorov on February 28 sent a tearful letter to

Voroshilov:

"I am not sinless ... But with all my decisiveness I will say that I would immediately cut the throat of anyone who dared to speak and call for a change in leadership ... Dear Kliment Efremovich! I am experiencing an exceptionally severe moral depression. I know and realize "that the testimony of the enemies of the people, despite their blatant villainess and slander, must be carefully checked. But I cannot but say about one thing, namely: of course, the Party must receive exhaustive data for the final decision of my fate. The decision will be the result of an analysis of the testimony of enemies against me and an analysis of my personality and the totality of all my personal properties ... I submitted a note to Stalin with a request to receive me at least for a few minutes in this exceptional period for which life. There is no answer. I want to tell him in a personal conversation that everything is bright the past, our joint work at the front, remains for me the most precious moment of my life, and that this past I have never allowed anyone to vilify, and even more so I have not allowed and cannot allow that I could change this past even in my thoughts and become only in deed, but also in thought, an enemy of the Party and the people. I ask you, Kliment Efremovich, to help in

accept me comrade. Stalin ... Once again I declare to you as my immediate superior, comrade-in-arms on the battle days of the civil war and old friend (as you put it in your greeting on the occasion of my fiftieth birthday), that my political honesty is unshakable both to the party, and to the motherland and people " .

But Stalin, unlike Tukhachevsky, did not accept Yegorov. Now there was no need to maintain any illusions with the disgraced marshal; knowing the nature of Yegorov, Iosif Vissarionovich still did not expect any sudden movements from him. Friend and colleague Klim did nothing to help. On March 2, Yegorov was removed from the list of candidates for membership in the Central Committee. The next day he again wrote to Voroshilov:

"I recognize this most difficult political decision of the party for me as absolutely and the only correct one, because this is required by the unshakable authority of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of the Soviet Union (6), as the leading body of our great party ... You will forgive me, Kliment Efremovich, that I annoy you with my letters. But you I hope you understand the exceptional severity of my experience, which is composed of two positions that are completely different in their essence.

Firstly, the unimaginable and indescribable situation that has developed around me of political soiling of me by enemies of the people and, secondly, the murderous fact of a flagrant crime against the homeland of my ex-wife is an indisputable fact, then the first, that is, the political soiling of me by enemies and traitors of the people, is completely inexplicable, and I have the right to call it the tragic event of my life.

How to explain this monstrous situation that has developed around me, when there is no political basis for it and there has never been such a case that I, or in my presence, anyone called for a speech against the leadership of the party, the Soviet government and the Red Army, then is recruited as a conspirator, enemy and traitor".

Yegorov still hoped for something, still believed that the old friend would not betray, still proved his innocence with obvious, as it seemed

marshal, things:

"Dear Kliment Efremovich! I spent all 20 years in the ranks of our native Red Army, starting from the first days of its inception at the front in 1917. I spent years of exceptional heroic struggle in its ranks, where I spared neither strength nor my life, having firmly embarked on the path of Soviet power, after breaking irrevocably with the past of my life (officer environment, populist ideology and absolutely any connection, connection, with anyone, from non-Soviet elements or organizations), broke all the bridges and bridges and there is no force that could bring me back to these old and dead people for me and their positions. In this I am also absolutely sinless and pure in front of the party and homeland. You, Kliment Efremovich, are a witness of my work on the fronts and devotion to Soviet power, and I turn to the leader of our party, the teacher of my political youth in the ranks of our party, comrade Stalin, and I dare to believe that he will not refuse to testify to my devotion to the cause of Soviet power. soldered me forever to the October Revolution and our great party. Is it really now, in the days of victories and the triumph of socialism, that I have slipped into the abyss of betrayal and betrayal of my homeland and my people, betrayal of the cause, which from the moment

recognition of Soviet power by me, I gave all of myself - my strength, mind, conscience and life. No, it never was and never will be.

Voroshilov did not testify to Yegorov's devotion to Soviet power. And from the "leader and teacher" the answer came pretty soon. On March 27, Yegorov was arrested. Further - according to the standard scheme: denial of guilt - torture confession of all ridiculous accusations and slander of comrades. According to one of the Chekists, Yezhov promised Yegorov to save his life if he "repents and reveals the criminal activities of others." Yegorov opened it, but Yezhov, with all his desire, could not fulfill his promise: he was removed from the post of people's commissar of internal affairs even before the end of the investigation into the marshal's case. Yegorov was shot already under Beria, on the day of the Red Army - February 23, 1939.

Neither friendship with Voroshilov, nor the fact that he spent a significant part of the civil war together with Kliment Efremovich and Iosif Vissarionovich, never disputed their opinions on fundamental issues and obediently exalted Stalin's role in the civil war did not save Yegorov. In the eyes of the dictator, the past membership of the marshal in the party of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries and his relatively high rank in the tsarist army - colonel - outweighed.

It is not known for certain whether Tukhachevsky wrote letters to Stalin and Voroshilov in the short period of time from his removal from the post of Deputy People's Commissar of Defense to the moment of his arrest. In any case, their texts have not survived to this day. But if he wrote, then probably in the same spirit as Yegorov. Of course, he did not mention only friendship with Voroshilov, since their relationship with Kliment Efremovich was like a cat with a dog. But the state of mind in those days with Mikhail Nikolayevich was probably the same as that of Alexander Ilyich Yegorov. Tukhachevsky knew perfectly well that he was not guilty of any conspiracy, and even more so espionage, and with all the greater bewilderment and horror he watched how, after the arrest of Kuzmina and exile in Kuibyshev, the alienation of others was growing.

By the way, it struck me that from the majority of those

military men who were arrested after the trial of Tukhachevsky, confessions had to be forced out with the help of physical measures. On the example of the participants in the "military fascist conspiracy", most of whom, I note, did not need to be beaten, they were convinced that confession of guilt and repentance did not save them from execution, and tried to remain steadfast to the end. Only few have been able to do it. The name of Tukhachevsky, right up to the death of Stalin, was an indispensable attribute of almost all "military conspiracies" invented by the people of Yezhov and Beria, a symbol of the blackest and meanest betrayal.

Not very long survived Mikhail Nikolaevich Tukhachevsky and the chief architect of his business, Nikolai Ivanovich Yezhov. It was time to suspend the "purge" in the party and the army for the time being. The Second World War was approaching, and soon some of the surviving military, mainly those who had not signed anything, were released and returned to the ranks of the Red Army. Yezhov, on the other hand, was removed from the post of People's Commissar of Internal Affairs without much fuss. Although it happened on November 24, 1938, the removal of Yezhov was announced in the newspapers only on December 8. It is curious that three days before the fall of the former beloved Stalinist "iron commissar", on November 21, Nikolai Ivanovich's wife Yevgenia Solomonovna Khayutina died under mysterious circumstances in a sanatorium near Moscow. Subsequently, as

and Tukhachevsky's mistress and Yegorov's wife, were declared a spy. Rumors spread around Moscow that Yezhov had poisoned his dear wife, fearing some kind of revelation on her part. With no less success, however, it can be assumed that Khayutina was removed by the people of Beria, who had been imposed on Yezhov as a deputy a few months earlier. After all, it was much easier to hang accusations of espionage or terror on the dead, and then bring the victim's husband, who had already fallen out of favor with Stalin, to them. Moor Yezhov also had to leave. He was arrested on April 10, 1939. During the investigation, Nikolai Ivanovich obediently testified that he had long suspected his wife of espionage. The former lover of Khayutina, the writer Isaac Babel, was also involved in the case and they constructed a spy-terrorist group from all three, who planned to kill Stalin. In addition to the traditional conspiracy, espionage and preparation of terrorist attacks, Yezhov was also charged with more original, but completely true accusations of falsifying criminal cases and homosexuality (at that time, let me remind you, a criminally punishable act). During the investigation, Nikolai Ivanovich admitted everything. He didn't even have to hit him. Yezhov knew too well how tongues are untied, and had not the slightest desire to experience the whole bunch of methods of physical influence in his own skin. But at the trial he denied everything except homosexuality. Yes, he repented, but in a rather peculiar way:

"There are also such crimes for which you can even shoot me ... I purged 14 thousand Chekists. But my great fault lies in the fact that I purged them a little ... Everywhere I purged Chekists. I didn't purge them only in Moscow, Leningrad and the North Caucasus. I considered them honest, but in fact it turned out that under my wing I hid saboteurs, pests, spies and other kinds of enemies of the people. "

Nikolai Ivanovich, of course, was shot. It happened on February 4, 1940. Like Tukhachevsky, Yakir and many others, Yezhov died with the words: "Long live Stalin!" Paradoxically, this toast united both the victims and the executioners in their dying moments, who suddenly turned into victims.

Most of Tukhachevsky's relatives and friends also died,

arrested after him. The third wife, Nina Evgenievna Grinevich, was first imprisoned in a camp, and in July 1941 they were shot along with the wives of Uborevich and Gamarnik. Marshal's mother Mavra Petrovna did not renounce her son and died in the camp. All the brothers of Mikhail Nikolayevich and sister Sofya, who remained alive by the 37th year, died in custody. Other sisters - Olga, Elizaveta and Maria - lived to see rehabilitation in the 57th sister. Both daughters of Svetlana survived. Yulia Kuzmina also survived, liberated from the camp on May 8, 1945 - on the day of victory ...

Mikhail Nikolayevich Tukhachevsky did not have a chance to participate in that big war that broke out on September 1, 1939, for which he was preparing himself and preparing the Red Army. Tukhachevsky's works on military theory and history, although they were republished after his rehabilitation (and some first saw the light only in the very last years), are in many ways inevitably outdated and, in general, quite thoroughly forgotten. In modern military science, they are rarely referred to.

The successful operations carried out by Tukhachevsky against Kolchak and Denikin have not been studied in the academies for a long time, and during the life of the marshal they were not given much attention. It was too obvious that in a future world war the scale and conditions of hostilities would

others. Mikhail Nikolaevich lost the largest battle in his life in Warsaw in all respects. What draws our attention to Tukhachevsky even today? Periodically renewed disputes, was he really a conspirator? Yes, sure. In the case of the "military-fascist conspiracy", as in the life of Tukhachevsky, there are still many mysteries and secrets; and the book you have read does not pretend to resolve and reveal all of them once and for all. But the main thing that is interesting for Tukhachevsky and sixty years after his death, I think, is still something else - in his brilliant military career. Mikhail Nikolaevich has now forever remained the youngest of the Soviet marshals. And the fact that the career was cut short on takeoff, abruptly and cruelly, gave it a tragic glow and a certain absolute completeness - almost simultaneously with it, the marshal's earthly life ended.

Could Tukhachevsky himself choose a different path? Or could his fate have turned out differently by chance? Let's say, if his escape from the Ingolstadt fortress had not succeeded and he would have had to stay in German captivity for much longer - until the October Revolution in Russia and the end of the First World War. Then, despite the former friendship with the Bolshevik Kulyabko, Mikhail Nikolayevich would have quite a lot of chances to be in the White Army. Most likely, Denikin (Kolchak was too far away). Especially if Tukhachevsky had returned to Russia during the period of White's success, say, in the summer of 1818. Of course, his stay in the same Volunteer Army would not have changed the general course of the civil war, but Tukhachevsky would certainly have risen to the rank of general. Let me remind you that Kolchak's top leader, that is, in fact, the commander of the entire army, Lebedev was no older than Mikhail Nikolayevich. Further, obviously, there would be living in exile as one of hundreds of freshly minted white generals. Then Tukhachevsky would be remembered only by historians of the civil war, but the path to world history would be blocked for him. And so he is one of the most prominent leaders of the largest and most armed army in the world, who was readily received by top military leaders in Paris, London, and Berlin. And even the process and the execution played to immortalize the name of Tukhachevsky. And immediately after the process, and in

During the rehabilitation period, articles and books about Tukhachevsky appeared all over the world in different languages. At first, he was seen as a failed Soviet Bonaparte, who lost the decisive battle with Stalin; then, when it became clear that there was no conspiracy, - an innocent victim of the Stalinist terror and a failed alternative to the leadership of the Red Army in the Great Patriotic War, but in any case - an extraordinary figure, truly of world significance.

There was another version of fate. Tukhachevsky could have remained in Germany, either immediately after being released from captivity, or having found himself here again after the retreat of the White armies from Russia. He could marry a German, join the Reichswehr, make a career there, reach the rank of general. Say fantasy? Meanwhile, with one of our compatriots, as it seems, this is exactly what happened.

In the combat schedule for June 21, 1941, the German Army Group Center prepared for the invasion of Russia, I found the commander of the 31st Infantry Division of the 12th Army Corps - Major General with the "originally German" surname Kalmykov. This division was advancing

north of Brest, and its artillery shelled the legendary Brest Fortress. I know nothing more about General Kalmykov. I don't even know his name or initials. I do not know his future fate. The 31st Infantry Division was destroyed in Belarus in July 1944, when the Red Army carried out the famous operation against Army Group Center, codenamed Bagration. But the name Kalmykov did not come across to me in the lists of German generals killed or captured by the Soviets. Probably then, in the 44th, he no longer commanded the 31st division. Perhaps Kalmykov became the commander or chief of staff of the corps (he definitely did not command the army) or went to serve in the headquarters of the so-called "Eastern troops", to which the Vlasovites and other formations from former Soviet citizens were subordinate. Or maybe he just died after the start of the Soviet-German war from some kind of illness ...

I believe that Kalmykov either had a German mother or wife. It is otherwise inexplicable how an emigrant from Russia managed to enter the Reichswehr, where there were only 4,000 officers, while after the end of the First World War, hundreds of thousands of officers of the Kaiser's army found themselves without work. And Kalmykov certainly had to serve in the Reichswehr. After all, a person who came to the Nazi Wehrmacht from the outside, and besides, a foreigner, could not have grown to the rank of Major General by the year 41!

Obviously, for Tukhachevsky, if he served in the German or any other foreign army, for example, in the French (then, most likely, there was a chance to find himself in German captivity a second time), the limit of his career would be the command of a division or corps. But this was clearly not the level that the ambitious lieutenant of the Guards aspired to. And such an outcome Mikhail Nikolayevich, I think, would consider for himself the greatest misfortune. Not to mention the fact that Tukhachevsky was a Russian patriot and did not have warm feelings for Germany, where he had to suffer in captivity. Therefore, with any line of fate, it is impossible to imagine Mikhail Nikolayevich, at the head of a German division going to the banks of the Bug, in order to enter the land of his homeland as a conqueror in a few hours. Although, if any of the listed options had nevertheless come true, Tukhachevsky, although he would not have become a marshal, would have lived much longer ...

So why did Tukhachevsky die? Why did the communist regime enter into a game with the devil (Stalin is only one of its brightest and most terrible offspring)? What did you expect or hope for? The marshal took the true answers to these questions with him to the grave. But it seems to me that for Tukhachevsky the main thing was not even patriotism, and even more so not the dream of a world proletarian revolution (which he, of necessity, accepted, and then began to recognize as his own). The main thing was to create the world's greatest army, stand at the head of it and someday test it in action. The slogan of a world proletarian revolution was very well suited for such a cause, and the Bolsheviks seemed to Mikhail Nikolayevich quite acceptable allies. In order to achieve his goal, he was ready, if not for everything, then for a lot: gassing the Tambov peasants, shooting the rebellious Kronstadt sailors, forcing all the people to tighten their belts and make cannons instead of butter ... And he did not think that there was no chance of surviving. With his mind, talent, independence of character in the conditions of a totalitarian dictatorship, there was no way for Tukhachevsky to survive.

it is forbidden. Undoubtedly, he was better suited than all the Soviet military leaders for the war for which he sought to prepare the Red Army. But in the end, the Second World War passed without him.